
THE
BRITAIN'S BIGGEST & BEST AMIGA GAMES MAG
ONE
AMIGA
September 1993 £3.75
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9 770969 293003
DM 20 Lire 12,000 Printed in the UK
BIGGER THAN ARNIE!
MASSIVE 132-PAGE ISSUE
bristling with essential info for the serious Amiga gamesplayer! Bite it and believe it!
What, no disk? Ask the newsagent!
What, no disk? Ask the newsagent!
DID SOMEONE SAY...
ACTION!
Psygnosis team up with Arnie to create the most explosive movie tie-in of all time - Last Action Hero! EXCLUSIVE report inside...
FIVE!?
Yes, there really are FIVE fully-playable demos on these disks! How do we do it?
AMIGA CD32 SPECIAL!
We review the first CD32 games! Will you dig Diggers? Or fantasise over Pinball Fantasies?
PLUS! Bumper preview of all the CD32 games in development! You and the CD32 - The Public speak!

HEAVY

REALMS OF ARKANIA, VOL. 1

Blade of Destiny, from the 'Realms of Arkania' world is based on Germany's most successful role-playing series and has a myriad of features that make this RPG one massive challenge.

Over 400 hours of gameplay.

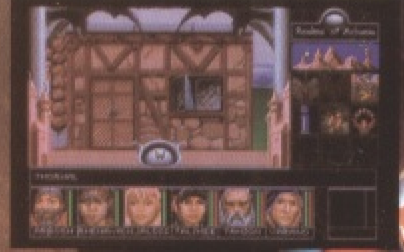
Stunning graphics.

- 2 levels of difficulty, which really do cater for both novice and expert RPG gamers alike.
- 12 different races, inhabiting over 50 towns and villages.

Available on:

Amiga, PC & Compatibles

(VGA - 640k min memory. Hard Drive, High Density. Supports AdLib™ and SoundBlaster).





EXPERIENCE A MILESTONE IN ARCADE ADVENTURE

Fast moving action and adventure feature in this unique combination of graphics, animation and music. Produced by Delphine Software, one of Europe's most respected development houses.

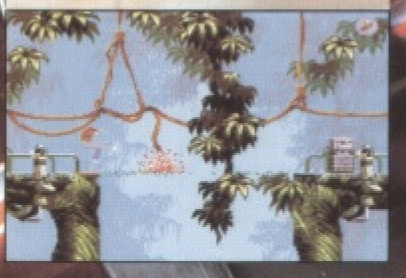
Flashback breaks new ground in computer games excitement and intrigue.

Astonishingly lifelike character animation is achieved by the innovative application of Rotoscoping-a technique first developed by the film industry to animate cartoons. Actors are filmed performing all of the movements to be featured in the game and stills from these sequences are used to recreate the movements on screen.

Available on:

Amiga and PC & Compatibles

(VGA- 550k min memory. Hard Drive, High Density. Supports AdLib™ and SoundBlaster. Hard Drive requires 8Mb of free memory to install).





ROLE-PLAYING FANTASY AT ITS MOST REAL...

Legends of Valour - The Dawning, gives you the freedom to make your own choices, move around, and create your own lifestyle and career path in the rich and detailed town of Mitteldorf. Travel at will above the ground or in the miles of underground caves, tunnels and sewers. It's your life to make of it what you will!

- Smooth scrolling, texture mapped 3-D viewpoint.
- Autocombat facility.
- Novice mode for beginners.
- From the creator of the award-winning 'Corporation'.

"Probably one of the most talked about games by Magazine reviewers this year."

Available on:

Atari ST, Amiga and PC & Compatibles

(VGA,MCGA, minimum memory 640k, High Density Disk Drive required. Supports AdLib™, SoundBlaster and Roland Sound Cards).







THE WORLD'S LEADING WORD GAME.

Whether you're a wizard with words or you spell Xylophone with a Z, you'll love this magical piece of programming from U.S. Gold. Scrabble for your screen.

Challenge up to 3 friends or take on the might of the computer solo.

12 skill levels to test seasoned pro's or first timers alike.

Contains every single page of the Chambers Official Scrabble Dictionary - over 134,000 words!

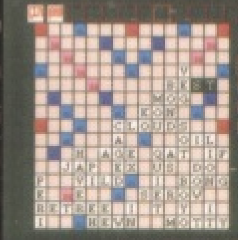
Print out facility to retain final board layout.

Computer Scrabble - for those who enjoy a night on the tiles.

Available on:

Atari ST, Amiga and PC & Compatibles

(EGA, VGA, minimum memory required 640k. Supports AdLib™ and SoundBlaster).



METAL

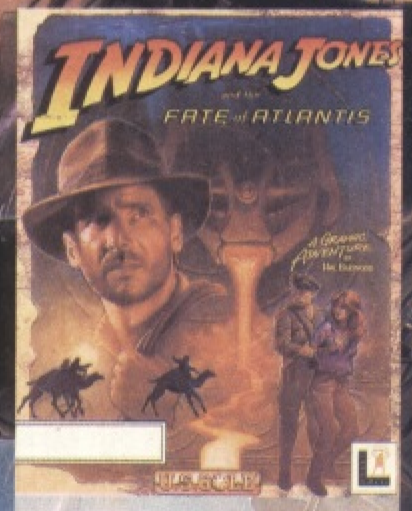


NEW GENERATION COMBAT SIMULATOR

Climb into the cockpit of an X-Wing Starfighter and battle for freedom. The galaxy is being plundered by the Dark Side, and you are desperately needed by the Rebel Alliance. Take the controls of the X-Wing Starfighter - now! Experience the incredible realism of polygon graphics and bit-mapped special effects as you fly against deadly TIE Fighters and menacing Star Destroyers. Be swept along by the interactive musical score and digitized Star Wars movie sound effects. At last, a new generation of space combat technology to challenge the evil Empire. Destroy the Emperor's ultimate weapon and end his tyranny.

Available on:

PC & Compatibles (MCGA, VGA, minimum memory required 640k and High Density Disk Drive required. Supports AdLib™ SoundBlaster, ProAudio Spectrum and Roland. Dos 3.1 or higher).



ONLY ONE MAN CAN HANDLE THIS MUCH ACTION & ADVENTURE

U.S. Gold and LucasArts Games present two thrilling versions of this feature game to test your nerve and brainpower - Indy and the Fate of Atlantis. Adventure and Action. The Action game dishes out all the excitement you can handle in a breathless race against evil.

The Graphic Adventure game tests your grey matter with some of the toughest puzzles yet.

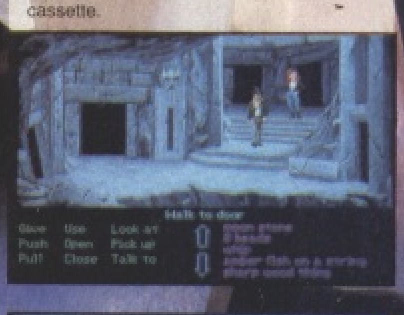
Individually, they're the hottest property this side of Atlantis. Together, they're the ultimate Indy Experience.

Action & Adventure Available on:

Amiga and PC & Compatibles (EGA, VGA, MCGA, 640k required. Hard Drive, High Density. Supports AdLib™, SoundBlaster and Roland Sound Cards).

Action only.

Atari ST, Amstrad (128k only) & C64 cassette & disk, Spectrum (128k only) cassette.





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Pick up some serious software that's solid Gold. U.S. Gold, that is.

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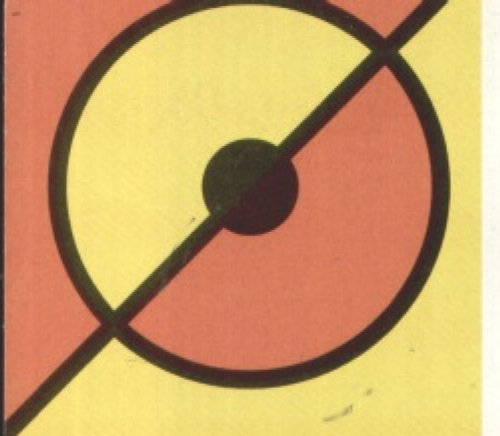
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SERIOUS SOFTWARE FROM





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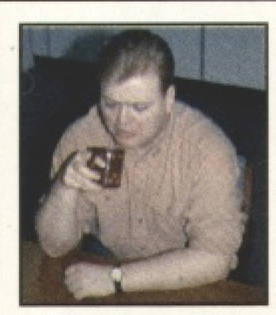
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It's strange but true but this page, which is probably the first you read, is the last we write. Isn't it a funny old world?



Hello! Yes, it's me - David, the editor. Regular readers will probably be a bit shocked to see my ugly mug turning up on the contents page (normally they don't have to start worrying about that until the start of the reviews) but now here I am, 'in your face' as you kids say, right at the beginning of the issue. And talking of the issue (great link!), what a top assortment of stuff we have for you: Last Action Hero exclusive preview; massive CD32 feature; Soccer Kid, Hired Guns, Premier Manager 2 and Ocean Golf (to name but a few) reviewed; and... ooh, stacks more. I'm getting a bit of a strange 'adult' feeling just writing about it. Hope it has the same effect on you! Enjoy yourselves and I'll see you in a month!

DAVID UPCHURCH, EDITOR.

4 CONTENTS
Er, you're reading 'em.

8 BOOT SECTOR
Er, you'll be reading them next. (Do this properly or you're out. - Ed)

13 NEWS
Okay, okay, don't get heavy. Alfred Chicken runs for Parliament, Rally is announced and much more! (Is this okay?) (That's better. - Ed)

18 WIN SOME PAINT!
Pysgnosis offer you the chance to go paintballing with them in this saucy Hired Guns compo!

20 LETTERS
You wrote 'em so now you can read 'em!

24 CD32 IS GO!
All about CD and things like that. I prefer albums, anyway. Somehow they sound 'warmer'. CDs sound is so precise and clinical. I'd never sell me stereo... (You're slipping again. - Ed)

35 WORK IN PROGRESS (now incorporating WHERE ARE YOU...?)

Phew! Games! Loads of them! And they're all half finished! Can we review them? (No, let's leave that sort of thing to the other mags. - Ed)

57 REVIEWS
Phew! Games! Loads of them! And they're all finished! Can we review them? (Oh, alright then, go on. - Ed)





LAST ACTION HERO...........................36
You want action? You got it! Big Arnie bursts onto the Amiga in what looks set to be a supremely excellent fightin'-'n'-fumpin' spin-off from his latest blockbuster movie! We tell you all about it - FIRST, of course - on page 36.

nts

CD32 IS GO!..............24
Phew! We've worked our sweet little butts off this month to bring you loads more stuff on the CD32. There's a report from the 'star-studded' launch, a preview of the new games coming out plus a chat to Joe and Joeline Public about what they think of the new machine. PLUS! We review the first CD32 games, Diggers and Pinball Fantasies!







88 UPDATES
Phew! (That's enough 'phews' now. -Ed) Pinball Fantasies on the CD32! Brrrrrilliant!

90 REPLAYS!
It's like the computer games equivalent of 'The Golden Hour' on Wun Ef-Em. Here's Chase H.Q. 2 - but what was the year?

95 KILL ZONE!
Dagga-dagga-dagga! Take that nasty horrible games that are really hard to complete! (It's the tips section, in other words. - Ed)

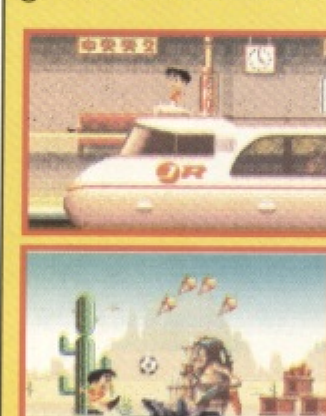
116 DIARY OF A GAME
Martyn Brown and the Team 17 boys take you through another hectic month in the life of Alien Breed 2.

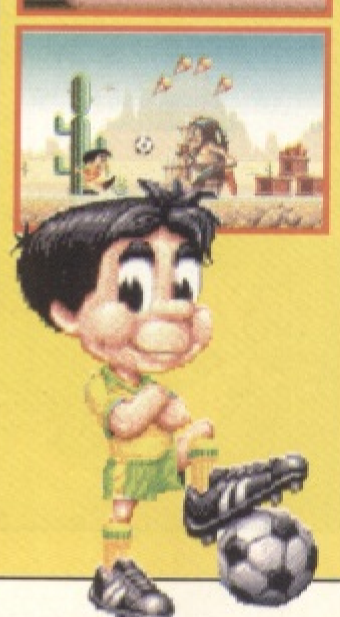
121 PD ZONE
Where the wild things are. (Hang on, that's the title of a children's book. - Ed)

124 YOU ARE A WINNER!
Flim-flam-flom! Write to fit! 50 words at 10p a word - that's £5! (You've gone too far this time. Out! Out! OUT! I'll do the rest. - Ed)

126 RECOMMENDED
A most interesting part of the magazine, wherein the forty highest-rated games of the last year are collated in alphabetical order for your perusal. In essence it's a software buyer's guide but hopefully has value beyond the purely monetary. (Yawn. - Everyone)

SOCCER KID............58
He's a 'kid'. And he likes 'soccer'. Hence he must be, ahem, 'Soccer Kid'. After fifteen centuries in development the game's finally finished and - thank gawd! - it's a smasher!



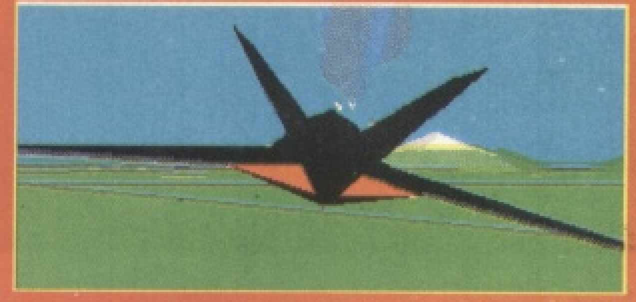


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YO! JOE!	REVIEW	74

DISKS THIS A-WAY!
We know it's not Christmas or anything but we've decided to be extra special to you this month. That's why you'll find FIVE - that's F-I-V-E - playable demos mega-packed onto the disks. And what corkers they are too. But - hey! - that's enough of my yakking. What d'ya say - let's boogie! (Or, in Earth-speak, please turn the page.)





BOOT SECTOR

LOADING YOUR DISKS
1. Grasp the chosen disk between finger and thumb and gently insert it into your disk drive.
2. Turn on your Amiga and make your selection of love.
3. Sing songs of happiness as demo after demo plops toasted and buttered into your mouth tasting oh-so-slightly of kipper. (That's enough 'wackiness' - Ed.)

BUBBA 'N' STIX

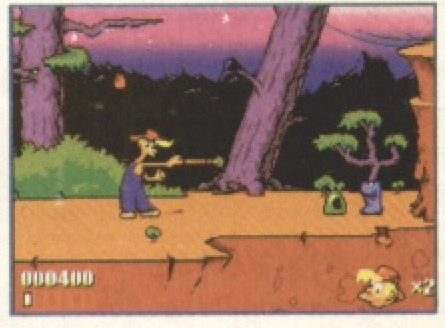


Core Design (1Mb only)

This has got to be one of the sexiest-looking demos that we've been fortunate enough to offer you lucky readers in a long while so don't wait around - load it up this very second!

The game's hero is Bubba, a rather ordinary delivery man, who is out one day delivering a load of animals to the local zoo. Suddenly an alien space ship on the look-out for exotic intergalactic creatures descends from the skies and kidnaps him, complete with lorry. As the craft screeches away through space an accident causes it to lose control. The craft's doors burst open, throwing







Bubba, along with other bizarre captives, onto a planet below, just seconds before it crashes. When Bubba comes to he finds himself with a new friend - Stix, a cute stick-like creature that was one of his fellow prisoners on the alien ship. Hand-in-hand, the two set out to get back home...

Bubba 'n' Stix is the latest puzzle adventure from Core Design. Essentially it's a platform game - but with a twist. As Bubba trots along, he must use Stix in a variety of ways to overcome the obstacles he faces. Bubba, as well as being able to use the Stix as a club to beat enemies



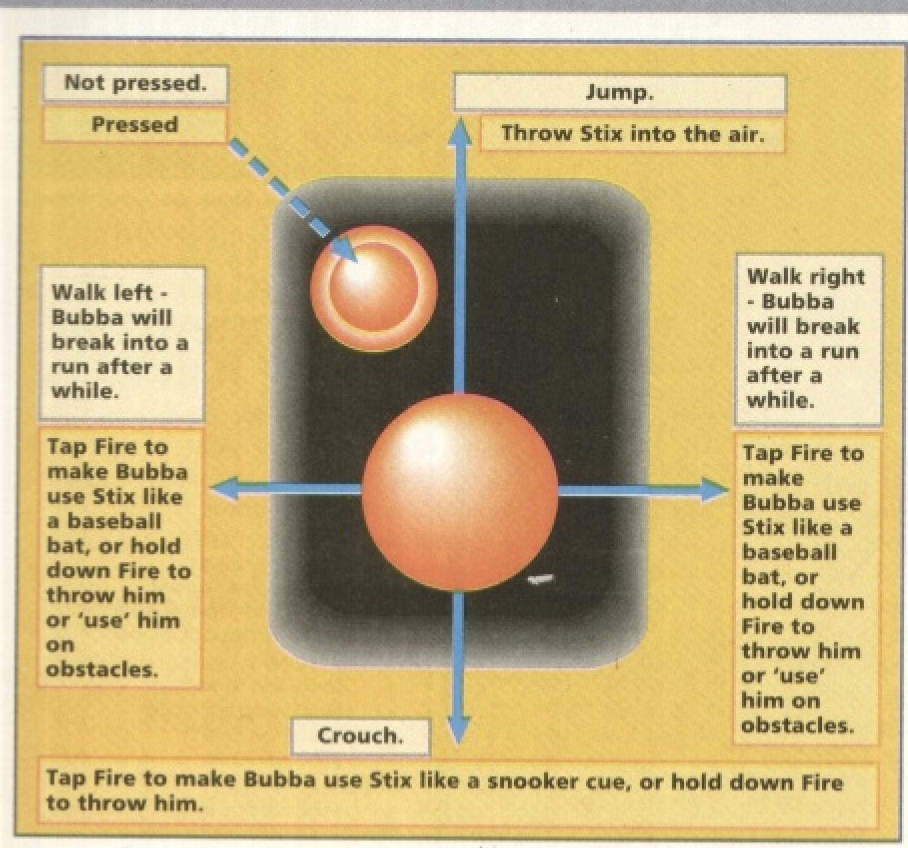
Blimey heck and flophg! (Excuse me? - Ed.) Yes, The One offers you another supa-sexy, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to see some of the best disks this side of Disk Heaven. What can I say? Cleverly disguised as humble 'ordinary' coverdisks, you'll find the best in previews and hot demo action folded and packed onto those blue square things we always stick on the front of each issue. As always, Matt Broughton is your host.



DISK A
BUBBA 'N' STIX
OVERDRIVE

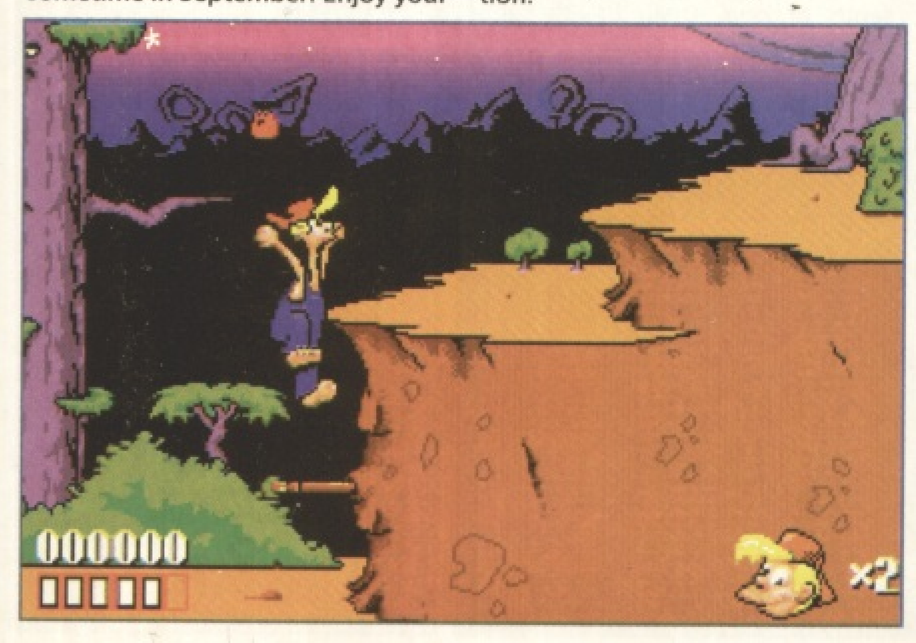


DISK B
F-117A, DEEP CORE & SUB. COMMANDO



over the head with, can employ Stix as a lever, a snooker cue, a tightrope balance, a javelin, a baseball bat and a platform to walk across. Stix is nothing if not versatile.

This demo shows just a tiny piece of the first level - the Alien Forest - with the full game being available sometime in September. Enjoy yourself, but watch out for those trees! PLEASE NOTE: You must remove any external peripherals, like disk drives and printers, from your machine for this demo to work. Also, please make sure that you select the right demo for your machine from the main menu. Thank you for your kind attention.



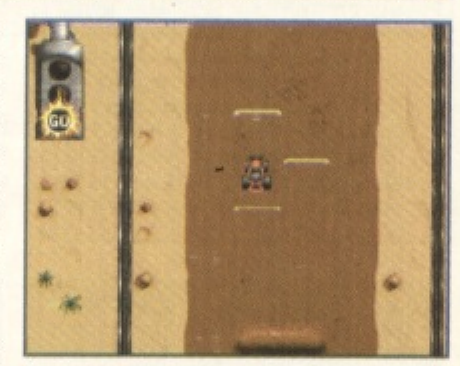
OVERDRIVE
Team 17 (1 Mb only)



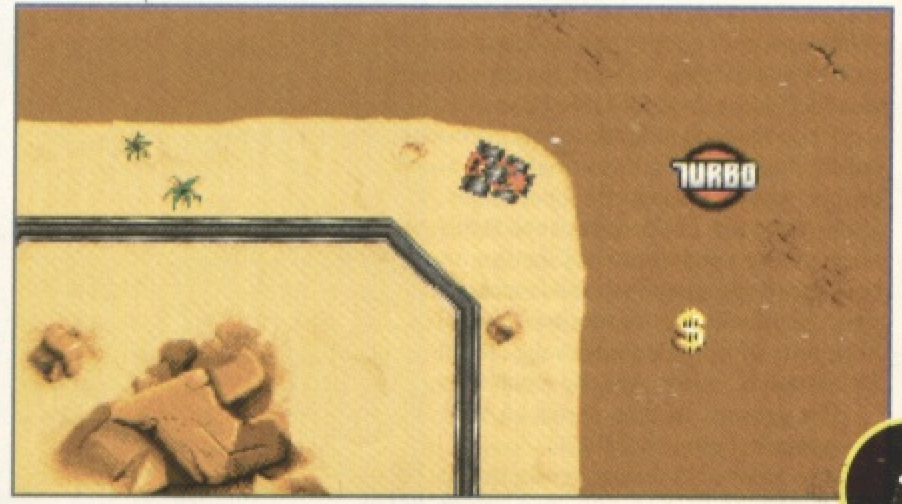
Hey, are you ready for this? TEAM 17. Yeah, thought that might get you excited. You kids are so predictable, I mean just mention Team 17 and you all start getting a bit frothy. TEAM 17! TEAM 17! TEAM 17! I bet you're spinning now, aren't you? Well, that will seem like nothing once you get your sweaty little hands on this darling.

The long-awaited Overdrive is getting closer and we've managed to get one circuit for you to practice on. Though fairly bare compared to the sort of thing that you'll find in the finished product, this is an excellent taste of things to come. I feel a bit redundant telling you how to play this demo as Team 17 have done their normal job of making it all nice and easy to get into, so hold down Fire to accelerate and off you go.

You're the only driver on this







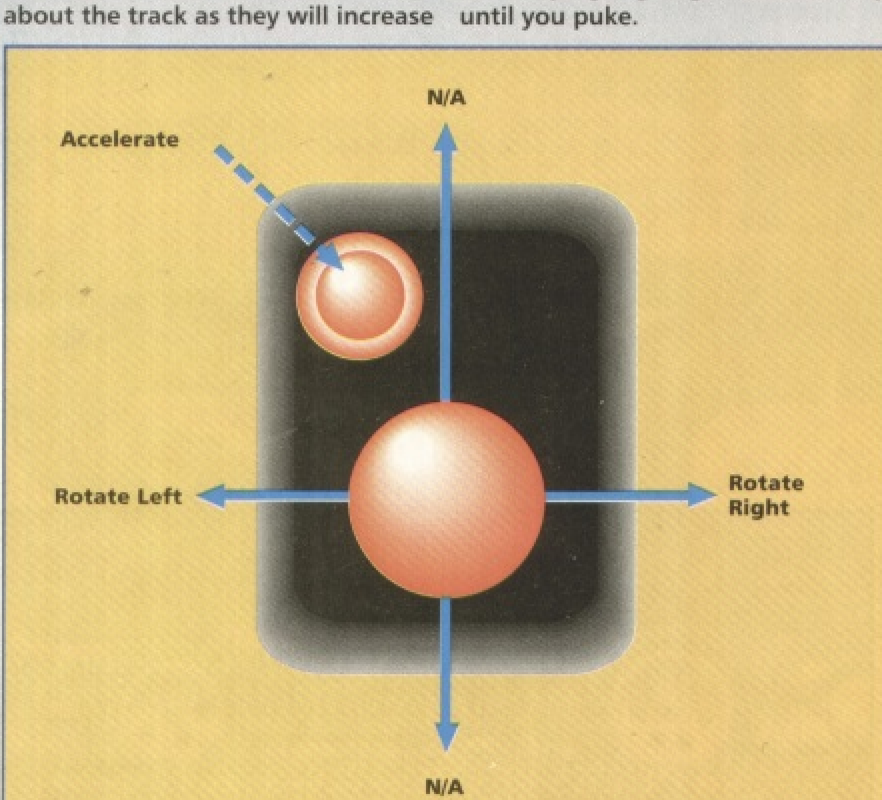
demo track so it's a race against the clock time - Simon is The One's representative with a best lap time of 11 seconds 60, so get your motor running and take Si to the cleaners - if you can!

If you're looking to set a top record you'll need to make good use of the turbo pads that can be found about the track as they will increase your top speed for a limited number of seconds. Other than that, it's all just a matter of getting used to the car's handling and learning the course. If at first it all seems a bit fast don't worry, just keep going and you'll find that with each lap you get more and more control. What more can I say - get going and don't stop until you puke.









SPECIAL F-117A T-SHIRT OFFER

The One, Microprose and Virgin Games Store have got together to offer you yet another superb freebie oppertunity. If you take this demo to any Virgin Games Store after F-117A's release (September 14th) and purchase the full game, you will receive a free F-117A T-shirt. Huzzah! You trendy youngsters just look better and better every day!

F-117A STEATH FIGHTER 2

MicroProse (1Mb only)

Thanks to our good mates at Microprose we are able to give you a taster of their newest sim F-117A in the form of a single mission disk. In this mission you have two specific targets to take out along with seeing off the many aircraft out to get you - check out the in-game mission overview for more details.

F-117A has all the stunning features that you've come to expect from MicroProse and more, with external views quite literally dripping from places you wouldn't imagine could drip. Cameras track you from all over the place as you let off chaff after chaff, swoopin' an' a-loopin' around the great open skies. Make good use of the radar at all times and use the variable magnification on the scanner to see what else is around you to avoid those embarrassing moments of non-air supremacy. You'll find that you can't actually crash into the ground in this demo so that should help just a bit!

To take off initially, press thrust until it reaches 100 and cruise along the runway, pulling up at the end - then you're away! Don't forget to raise your landing gear though.

Unfortunately there's no music or sound effects in this demo but just belt out Ride Of The Valkeries, er Valkyrys, er Val Kilmer - Oh sod it, just bung on Dambusters in the background and let the atmosphere take you away.

The plane movements (banking, etc.) are all controlled by the joystick, but what flight sim would be complete without the obligatory thousands of keys. Deep breath, here goes...



THE OBLIGATORY THOUSANDS OF KEYS

1	Flare
2	Chaff
3	IR jammer
4	ECM
5	Decoy
6	Gear up/down
7	Auto-pilot on/off
8	Bay door open/close
9	Extend/retract flaps
0	Brakes
+	Increase throttle
-	Decrease throttle
Backspace or Fire	Fire cannon
Return	Fire weapon
Space	Change weapon bay
/?	Track camera ahead
>	Track camera rear
<	Track camera right
M	Track camera left
N	Designate new target
B	Select new target
Z	Zoom tactical/outside views
X	Unzoom tactical/outside views
Alt P	Pause
Alt D	Detail level adjust
Alt T	Activate training mode
Alt R	Resupply (training only)
F1	Return to cockpit
F2	Change HUD mode (Ground/Air/NAV)
F5	View weapons
F7	View waypoint
F9	Instrument landing system on/off
F10	View mission orders

OUTSIDE VIEWS

Shift F1	Slot view
Shift F2	Chaseplane view
Shift F3	Side view
Shift F4	Missile view
Shift F5	Tactical view
Shift F6	Inverse tactical view
Shift F7	Multi view



SUBURBAN COMMANDO

Alternative Software (1Mb only)





Not pressed.

Pressed (hold down to activate jet boots when in the air.)

Jump.

Perform upper-cut; perform flying kick if in the air

Walk left

Walk Right

Crouch.

Perform long sweep or fall through platform; perform roll, defend or sliding kick if moving; perform stomp if falling

Ever heard of Hulk Hogan? Of course you have! Who could have missed this rather strange-looking man bombing around the American wrestling ring, hurting people with his funny-coloured skin and dodgy blonde 'tash.

You may also be aware that he is the main character in the film Suburban Commando (obvious choice for actor - ahem) where he plays an alien by the name of Shep Ramsey (obvious name for an alien hero - ahem, ahem) who has heroically crashed on Earth after destroying the evil General Suitor's star ship. Well, what you may not have realised is that you now own a demo of the game that is based upon that film. You did? Oh.

This demo is part of the city level in the game where Shep (get down) finds himself in a disused disco in Los Angeles. Shep needs to find materials to repair his damaged ship in order to leave Earth before the General's guards and bounty hunters catch up with him.

The object here is to collect all the computer chips scattered around LA so that the all important repairs can be made to his computer. Time is limited, but once you know where all the chips are to be found there is enough time to complete the demo. You will need to look for secret passageways and shafts, keys to open doors and fuel for your jet boots in order to leave some rooms.

The control of Hulk/Shep is all fairly instinctive and to use the jet boots just hold down fire when you jump into the air. If you get stuck in one area, look for baddies to kill as they may leave you some jet fuel that will help you out.

BUT THE DISK DOESN'T WORK MATRON!

What? Oh, I am sorry to hear that. Unfortunately, due to the huge number of duplicates made, there will always be the odd couple of disks that won't do as they're told. Whatever you do, DON'T SEND THEM TO US! The thing to do is to send them off to this address with a SAE for 28p:

The One Coverdisk Returns,
PC Wise,
Dowlais Top Business Park,
Dowlais, Merthyr Tydfil,
Mid Glamorgan CF48 2YY.

Perform this simple task and a new disk will be on its way before you know what's happened. If you think that you can solve your problems down the phone, call the PC Wise helpline on (0685) 350505 between 10:30am and 12:30pm on weekdays.

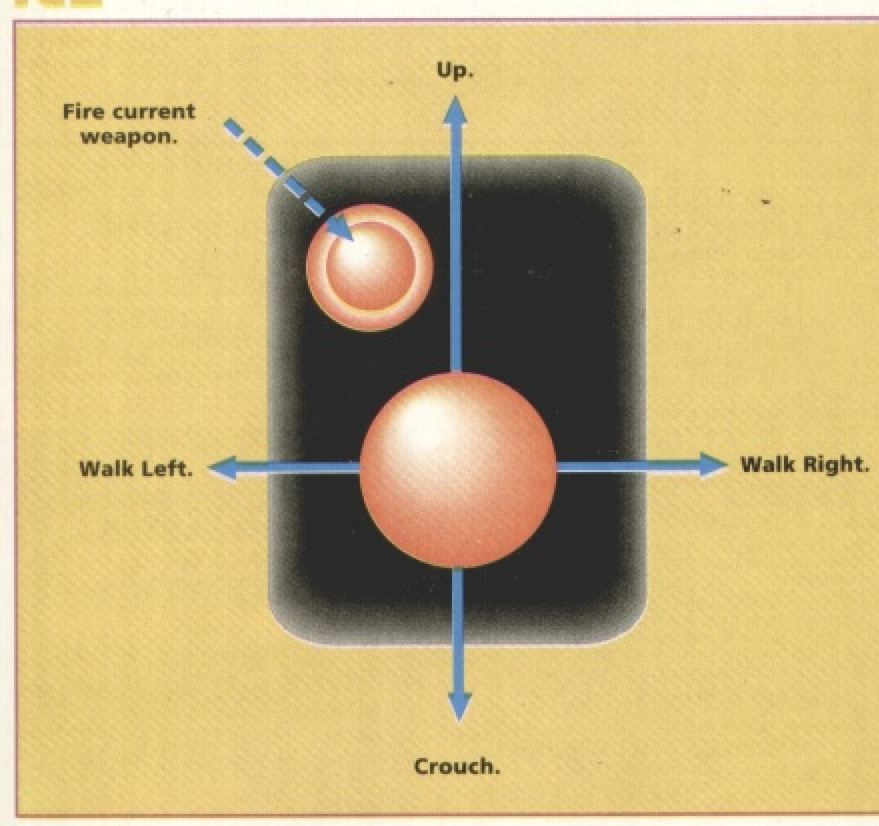
The Small Print Bit.

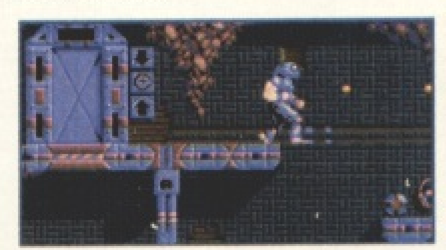
1. Whilst we here at The One make every effort to check the coverdisks for all known viruses, we can accept no responsibility for damage caused by viruses which may have escaped our attention.

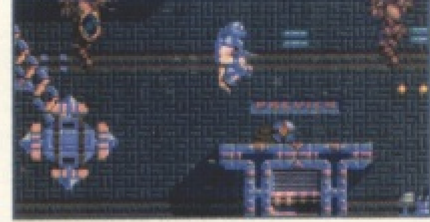
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DEEP CORE

ICE







Anyone familiar with Simon's review of Deep Core last month (81%) should need no introduction to this little smarty. You say you didn't catch it? Oh well, just for you...

Satellites have tracked a strange object entering the atmosphere and disappearing into the sea. At the same time the US Navy has lost contact with a research base far below the sea's surface. Doesn't sound too good so far does it? Well, to cut a long story short (i.e. I can't be bothered to copy any more out of Si's review) it's all down to you, Captain Downrazor, to check out the base and find out just what's going on.

This demo offers just a taste of what you can expect from the full game released later this month so grab a gun and take a deep breath. You start with the minimum weaponry available, but dispatch a few aliens and you should find some toys left behind. Small pods contain oxygen or energy, while icons show the upgrade available for your guns, doubling and trebling your firepower with each collection.

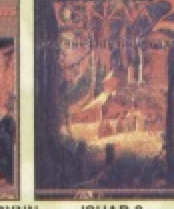
Doors and panels bar your way and you'll need to collect the correct keys to progress. Luckily all the obstacles are labelled so all you have to do is find the matching key and, 'open sasquatch', you're in.

Aliens aren't the only problem you'll need to overcome as the base's defences are all still running - this means laser turrets and force fields will all need to be negotiated, not to mention huge swinging nasty things. Descriptive, huh?

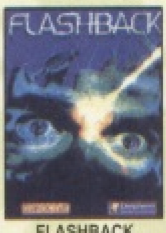
Take your time and don't forget to keep an eye on your oxygen level - after all, you are a bloody long way down.....


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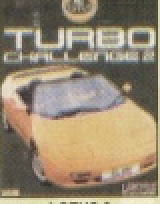
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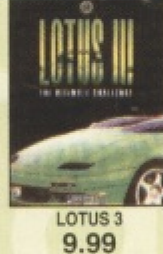

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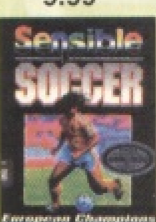

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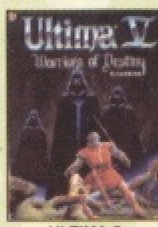

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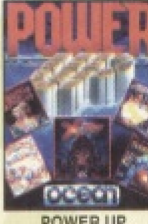
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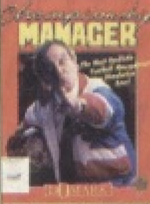
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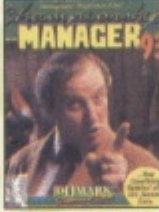

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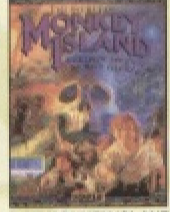

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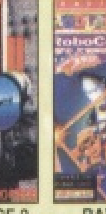

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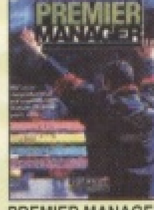

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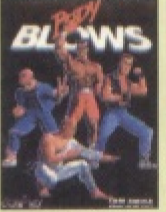

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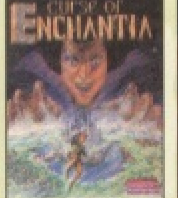

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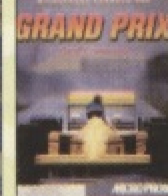

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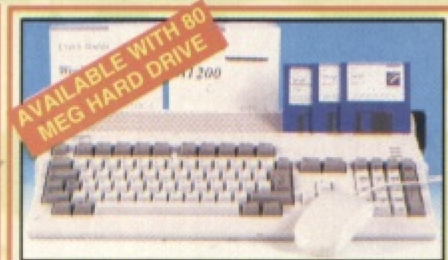
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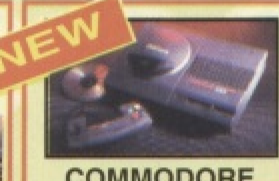


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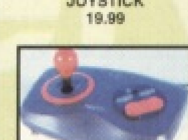
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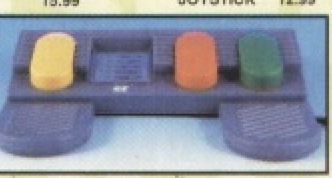
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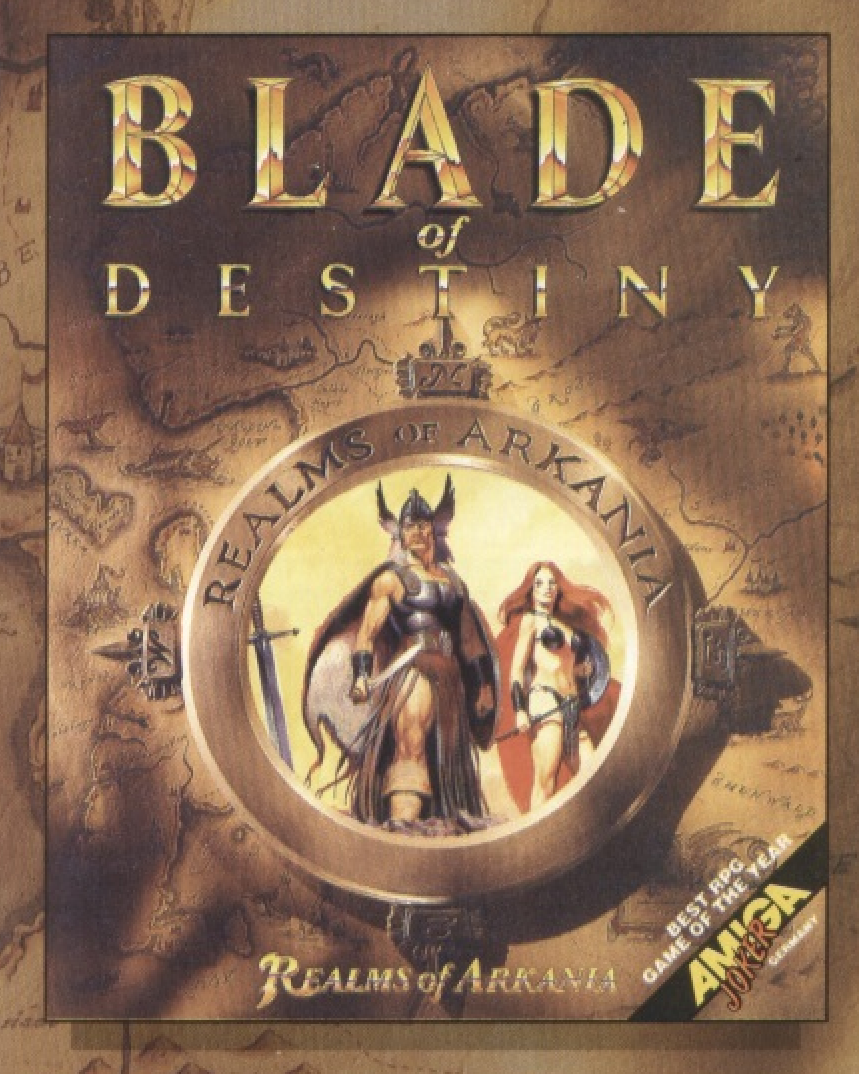
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NEWS

VOTE ALFRED!

With so many whacky cartoon characters 'starring' in their own games nowadays, how is a daft-looking red chicken supposed to stand out from the Zools and Mr Nutz's of this world?

Easy... He should stand for parliament.

At least that's the scheme that Mindscape came up with to promote Alfred Chicken - and with the Christchurch by-election causing such a stir in the news last month, the whole publicity stunt turned out to be eggs-actly what the doctor ordered.

For the minuscule sum of £500 (the standard deposit which has to be paid by all prospective parliamentary candidates), Mindscape launched the political career of Alfred Chicken, whose long and arduous campaign eventually netted him the sum of 18 votes - two ahead of the Rainbow Alliance Party.

Probably more important than all that though, the ensuing media circus won the foolish fowl countless TV appearances (culminating in a classic scene where he lined up alongside the Labour, Liberal Democrat and Conservative candidates for the announcing of the result) and numerous appearances in the tabloid press.

Alfred wasn't the only candidate to stand on a slightly less than serious platform, as the by-election also attracted entrants from the 'Sack Graham Taylor Party', the slightly less subtle 'Buy the Daily Sport Party' and, of course, some twit from the 'Monster Raving Looney Party'.



All of the above lost their deposits but there was even some consolation to be gained from this, as the same fate befell the Labour candidate.

All of this mullarkey, of course, was nothing more than some barefaced publicity-seeking for Mindscape's forthcoming platformer, Alfred Chicken, which you can read about in more detail on page 42.

Now what about John Major: The Game?



IT'S RALLY GOOD!

After a long period of quiet on the games front, Europress Software look set to bounce back with a vengeance when Rally is released on the Amiga this November.

Produced in collaboration with the RAC, Rally is a faithful simulation of this year's four-day rally, which is the final round of the World Rally Championship. Players will be able to get behind the wheel of a Ford Escort Cosworth, a Toyota Celica or other entrants from Lancia, Mitsubishi or Subaru and try their luck at winning this highly-prestigious event - without ever having to leave their armchair! With the RAC's help and guidance, Europress Software claim to have created the most accurate, authentic and up-to-date rallying simulation around.

And it certainly looks impressive from these PC screenshots, what with its texture-mapped scenery and what not. How the Amiga version will fare in comparison is anybody's guess at the moment, but our hopes are high. At least there will be a 256-colour version for those lucky A1200/A4000 owners with their AGA chipsets. More news soon.

LIVE '93!

One swallow might not make a summer but a video game show definitely means that winter is fast approaching. Yes, Live '93 is nearly upon us. It's a general consumer event which will features games alongside all manner of electronic gadgetry including hi-fi, cameras, televisions and so on. The computer games side of things will feature a 'pairs' competition, where teams must consist of players who "span two generations". Live '93 will take place at Olympia between September 16th and 20th.

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Hillingdon.





THE CODIES GO COSMIC!

In case you've been wondering why Codemasters have been so quiet of late, it seems that the Warwickshire whizzkids have been busy knocking about with Sega for the last few months or so and haven't really had a lot of time to spend with their old Amiga chums.

But rest assured all of that is about to change, as the Codies are planning to come back with a bang and have lined up two major Amiga games to keep them busy until Christmas.

The first is the eagerly-awaited Amiga arrival of Codemasters' hit Mega Drive game, Micro Machines, a multi-vehicle arcade racing game with a difference. Turn to the Work In Progress on page 40 for the low-down on this.

Following that is Cosmic Spacehead. Featuring the first ever alien tourist as its eponymous hero, Cosmic Spacehead is an arcade adventure set in three locations - the planet Linoleum, the asteroid Detroitica and an orbiting space station.

Along the way there are characters to meet, puzzles to solve and 32 arcade action games to master as Spacehead attempts to prove Earth's existence by bringing home some holiday snaps of our planet.

Despite the fact that it will not be released until November Cosmic Spacehead has already attracted the attention of Central Television, which will be broadcasting a 'making of the game' documentary during October.



WHY I LOVE MY £3.75 THE ONE

What a joy it is to read The One - not only do you cover all the latest games but the magazine is good fun too. I'd be happy to pay up to forty-five Earth pounds for a magazine that makes me grin.

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ONE





COMMODORE GET BULLISH!

In an attempt to consign its recent financial problems to the dustbin of history, Commodore has announced an optimistic set of sales forecasts for the Amiga, in all of its multiple guises, for the remainder of 1993.

With the first batch of 40,000 CD32s arriving in the shops in early September, Commodore is predicting that it can sell 400,000 units of the machine throughout Europe in the run-up to Christmas. By that time, the CD-based model will be joined by a new A1200 pack for the festive season. The A600 however, will probably become a thing of the past.

Overall, Commodore is hoping to sell a total of 450,000 Amigas in the UK throughout 1993 - this will be made up of 220,000 A1200s, 180,000 CD32s and 50,000 A600s. This will better the 1992 figure by 50,000.

Commenting on the imminent launch of the new CD-based Amiga, Commodore's joint UK boss David Pleasance says: "We're putting everything that we've got behind this one - and that includes TV and lots of promotions. This machine is going to be the biggest that we've ever had."

Commodore is remaining tight-lipped on the subject of the new machine's Full Motion Video (FMV) upgrade module, but sources close to the firm suggest that it could be available by as early as next month at a price not unadjacent to £200.

WELCOME TO DISCWORLD!

Legendary science fiction comedy writer Terry Pratchett has become the latest cult hero (following the likes of Dave Gibbons and H.R. Giger) to become embroiled in the world of Amiga games, as Croydon-based Teeny Weeny Games has snapped up the rights to develop a game based on his long-running series of Discworld* novels.

"We're really pleased with this one," says Teeny Weeny managing director Angela Sutherland. "Terry wasn't all that interested to begin with - apparently he'd had a bad experience with another software company about six or seven years ago, so he was reluctant to get involved again. But after we spent six months pursuing him, he went from showing no interest at all to being really enthusiastic, and eventually became really involved with all aspects of the game."

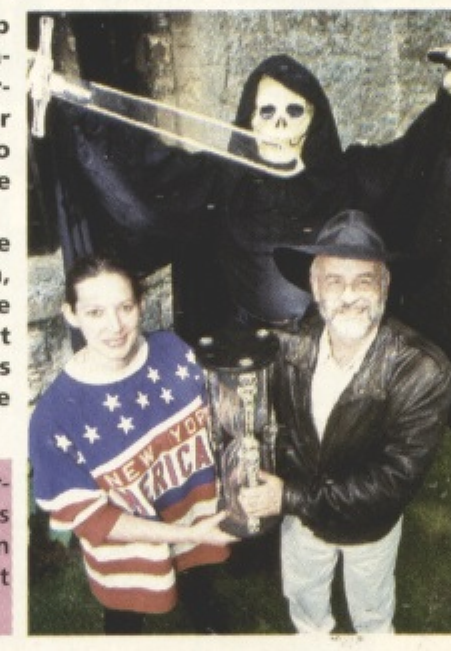
Becoming involved with all aspects mean that Pratchett keeps a close eye on the script throughout the game's development, offering advice and suggestions along the way.

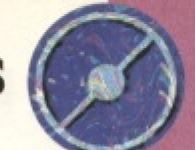
The game - which will go by the imagination-busting title of Discworld - will be a Monkey Island-style graphic adventure, featuring the exploits of one Rincewind, an inept wizard who is helped along the way by his 'luggage' (a multi-legged intelligent chest).

Teeny Weeny Games, which up until now has specialised in console game development, is currently in discussion with a number of other programming teams to find a suitable home for the Amiga version.

Before Pratchett fans become too excited by this news though, it should be noted that the game will not be available until next Christmas (yup... Christmas 1994!), at which time it will arrive on both CD and floppy disk.

* The Discworld is a flat world, carried through space on the shoulders of four enormous elephants, who in turn stand on the giant shell of Great A'tuin, a 10,000-mile long turtle.





GAMETEK GETS GOING!



With the exciting business of setting up a new office, hiring top-level industry gurus to sit behind the desks and making numerous bold statements now all but complete, the UK's latest US immigrant publisher Gametek (which is headed up by ex-Commodore chief Kelly Sumner) has finally knuckled down to the mundane day-to-day activity of announcing its first games.

Consisting mostly of conversion of its own existing console titles or similar games licensed from cartridge giant Konami, Gametek's debut catalogue contains games of mixed content, quality and price.

First up will be September's releases: Nascar, American Gladiators and an A1200 version of The Humans.

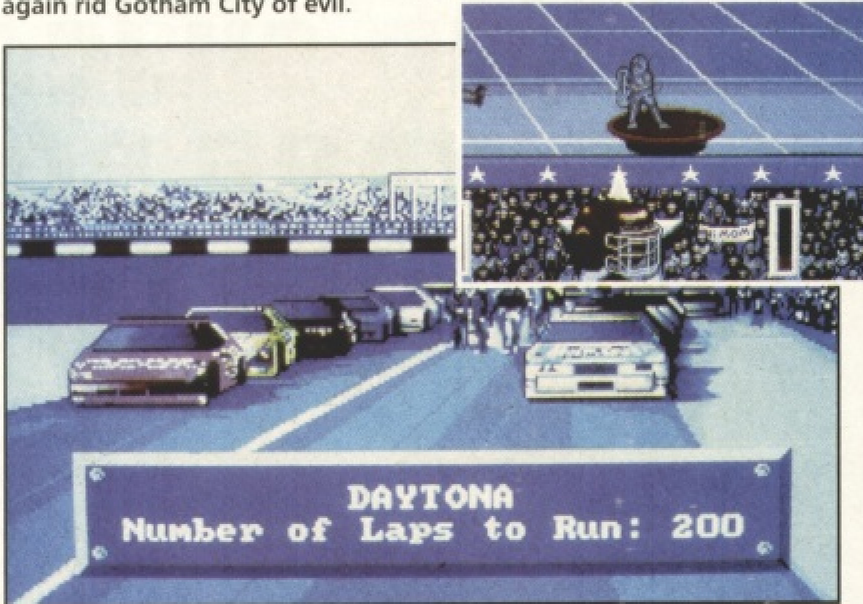
Based on the North American Sports Car championship (hence the name) and co-designed by top driver Bill Elliott and the Distinctive Software team (of Test Drive fame), Nascar will attempt to recreate the thrills and spills of high speed track-tastic action. For some reason best known to themselves, the powers that be at Gametek have chosen to slap a £14.99 price tag on this one - while insisting that it's not a budget game! Time will tell.

American Gladiators is a multi-faceted 'sports simulation' based on the US original which ITV borrowed for its own Gladiators series. Priced at a more normal £24.99, this one includes all of the stars of the US show (including Nitro, Ice and Thunder) in a succession of bone-jarring events including The Wall, The Joust and The Powerball.

Finally for September will come the A1200-specific version of The Humans, the prehistoric puzzle game which was a hit last year for Mirage. This was originally a Gametek console game in the US and now that the firm has set up in the UK it has decided to publish the enhanced Amiga version itself.

The final entry in the opening Gametek line-up will be October's Batman Returns, a beat-'em-up/driving game based on the sequel to one of the most hyped movies of all time. This time around, the Caped Crusader takes on The Penguin and Catwoman in an attempt to once again rid Gotham City of evil.





GREMLIN PROMISE MORE LOTUS!

Gremlin Graphics is set to continue its relationship with the glamorous world of racey sports cars, with the signing of a new long-term licensing agreement with Britain's finest, Lotus.

The new worldwide agreement, which looks set to take Gremlin and Lotus hand in hand into the world of new technology, gives the software publisher exclusive worldwide rights to produce games based on Lotus hardware for a period of three years.

Speaking for Gremlin, marketing director David Martin says: "The Lotus endorsement is a seal of quality. We are delighted to be renewing our agreement with Lotus and look forward to working with them on new games for the new technology now on the way."

It's believed that this 'new technology' will include Commodore's new CD32 player.

Gremlin's first Lotus game appeared way back in 1990, since when the series has gone on to sell more than half a million copies in all of its various guises.

SDL AND SILICA GO HARDWARE BONKERS!



Things are hotting up on the Amiga hardware front, with two of the biggest names in the business offering new deals on both the A1200 and the A570 CD-ROM drive.

With the basic 1200 having dropped in price to £299, SDL is now offering a new configuration, complete with a built-in 30Mb hard drive, for the original price of £399. Both this new set-up and SDL's original 85Mb hard drive model are completely covered by Commodore's one year on-site warranty.

While SDL's offer is totally hardware related, the new A570 promotion from Silica Systems prefers to leave the existing CD hardware intact and concentrate instead on offering an improved software collection.

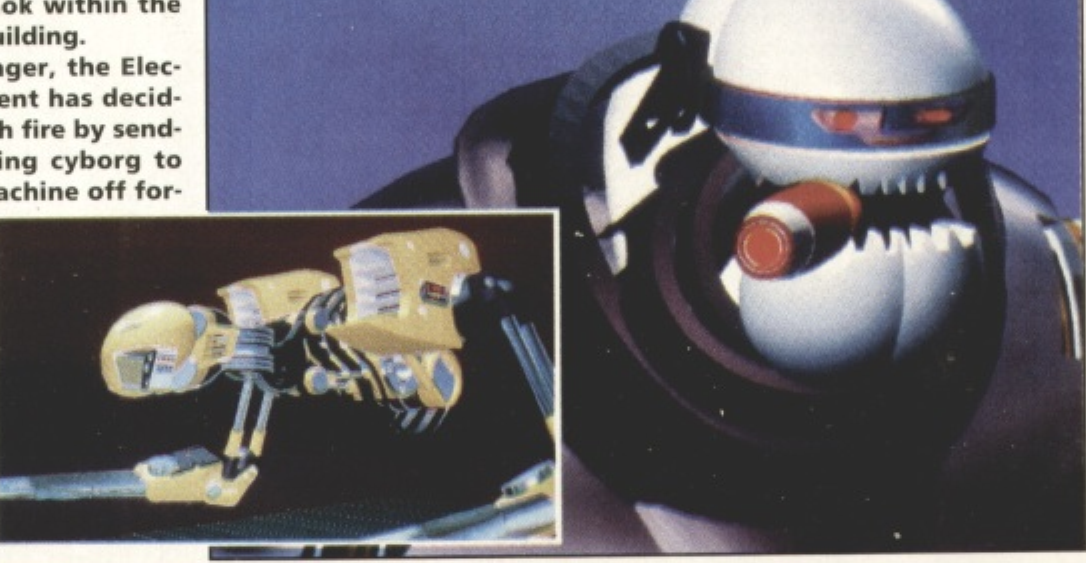
The new bundle offers four titles - Lemmings, Hutchinson's Encyclopaedia, Sim City and the Fred Fish CDPD Collection - along with the basic drive, for an inclusive price of £149. This represents a saving of almost £315 on the original recommended prices.

MIRAGE RISE AGAIN!

Something stinks in Metropolis 4 - and as the waste disposal is entirely carried out by robots, it can't be the trash. The Supervisor, a super computer/robot which singlehandedly takes care of the city's infrastructure, has gone a touch mental and is running amok within the vast Electrocorp building.

Sensing the danger, the Electrocorp management has decided to fight fire with fire by sending in a hard-hitting cyborg to switch the mad machine off forever. No prizes for guessing who this cyborg is, and a similar amount if you worked out that all of this is an excuse for some good old-fashioned beat-'em-up action.

However, this is no straightforward beat-'em-up (as the pictures will testify) as it consists entirely of very impressive ray-traced characters. While the static pictures look impressive, it remains to be seen how well they will function once they get moving - CD-ROM owners will be able to find out for themselves sometime before Christmas, when Mirage releases Rise Of The Robots for A570 and CD32.



STRIPTEASERS

...Computer games domination of the high street continues with the latest entrant to the race, Future Zone, pushing ahead to meet its target of opening 40 stores throughout the country by the end of this year. The latest Future Zones to open their doors to the public are in Blackpool's Houndshill Centre and the Lakeside Shopping Complex in Thurrock...

...Looks like it could be time to clean out your PD disk collection, as the government is launching a crackdown on computer pornography. The influential Home Affairs Committee is to carry out an enquiry into the alleged problem, the results of which should be available before the end of the year...

...Construction begins this month on Cannonball City, a new $30 million Tokyo theme park funded by arcade giant Taito. This follows a similar move by Sega's arcade division and could mark the shape of things to come in out-of-home gaming. It's not known if Taito has any plans to recreate the Cannonball City concept in the West...

...Good news for A1200 owners! EA have got a special A1200-only version of Wing Commander in the works, boasting 256 colours throughout and a faster screen update (apparently the code is being revamped to take full advantage of the A1200's 68020 processor and its special features). The game should be ready for an Autumn release, so look out for a full review soon...

...Don't say we told you, but rumour has it that Stavros Fasoulas and his Finnish coding chums Terramarque have got an Amiga beat-'em-up in development that makes Streetfighter 2 on the Super NES look like a Spectrum game. Stavros (who was responsible for some of the greatest C64 games ever) unveiled the game in demo form on an A500 at a recent coder's party and apparently jaws dropped around the room. Indeed, so impressive was the demo that many of the onlookers started searching for a hidden A4000 'behind the scenes'. No news on who's going to publish it yet but we'll keep you posted...

OH WHAT JOY!

Apparently there are a few odd folk out there who actually prefer the ergonomic disasters which console owners refer to as 'joypads' to the good old-fashioned British joystick - the 'stick that's seen this great nation through thick and thin, the 'stick that built an empire... (any more and you're fired - Ed).

Ahem. If you are one of those people, then Spectravideo have just the thing for you, in the shape of the new six-button Logipad. Featuring closed microswitch technology (coo!) and two types of autofire on all six buttons, the new pad will be available shortly priced at £17.99. Joypads... pah! Next they'll be getting rid of the keyboard and turning the Amiga into a console...

CHARTS!

THE AMIGA FULL-PRICE TOP TEN

As supplied by Virgin Games Centre.

1. Syndicate (Electronic Arts)
2. Dune 2 (Virgin Games)
3. Goal! (Virgin Games)
4. Gunship 2000 (MicroProse)
5. Space Legends (Empire)
6. Graham Gooch's Cricket (Audiogenic)
7. Flashback (US Gold)
8. Championship Manager '93 (Domark)
9. Desert Strike (Electronic Arts)
10. Battle Isle '93 (Blue Byte)

TREX WARRIOR ALERT!

We hope you are still enjoying Trex Warrior, the Thalion game we gave away on last month's coverdisk. However, there were a couple of rather serious omissions from the game's instructions. Let us now make amends...

To fire missiles, wait until you've got an enemy droid in your sights and then press the 'M' key. The sight will change. When you press the left mouse button you'll now loose off a missile.

To use the shockwaves the process is identical, except that this time you should press the 'S' key to change the target sights.

Hope that helps you all out.

WHY I LOVE MY £3.75 THE ONE

The £3.75 The One is a godsend for pensioners like me. It's always been my favourite. No other magazine helps its older readers by making the pictures fairly large so we can see them.

David Upchurch,
Highbury.

ONE



DIAMOND LEAVES GAMESMASTER

The new series of Channel 4's popular Gamesmaster programme, which kicks off a 26-show run on September 9th, will have to cope without its long-standing presenter Dominik Diamond, as the amiable Jock has turned in his Butlins-style redcoat to head for pastures new.

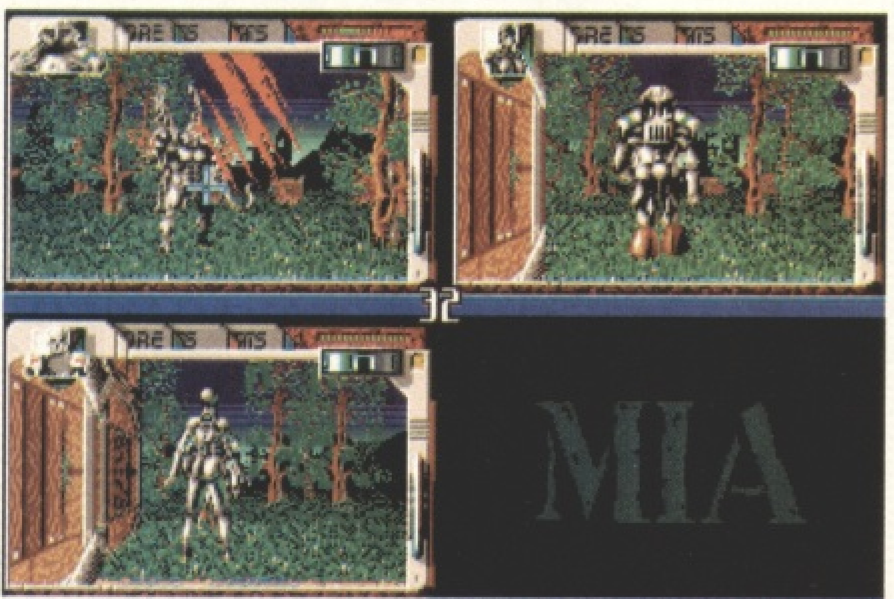
The departure comes as the show's maker, Hewland International, has signed a sponsorship deal with burger giant McDonalds and begun a campaign to take the show overseas to new audiences.

No news has emerged as to who will be Diamond's successor, although Hewland has confirmed that Patrick Moore will continue his role as the floating head Gamesmaster, dishing out help and advice to beleaguered gamers.

WIN!

THE FIGHT OF YOUR LIFE PART 2! PLUS!

Five copies of Hired Guns for the runners-up! All courtesy of Psygnosis!





THE NEEDLESS WAFFLE

It only seems like a month has passed since we offered you the chance to run around a Quasar arena with lasers, shooting The One team and generally reliving your childhood fantasies all courtesy of our marvellous Walker compo. Oh it was. Damn, let's start again.

Last month we offered you the chance to run around a Quasar arena with lasers, shooting The One team and generally reliving your childhood fantasies. Well now it's time for the real fun to begin. You see, Walker may have been an ultra-violent blast with bodies spewing litres of blood all over the place but Hired Guns is much, much harder.

Forget the relative safety of a huge, armoured, ED209-like robot - in Psygnosis's latest release you have to wander through post-apocalyptic cities on your own two feet, assassinating specified targets whilst managing to maintain an acceptable supply of life points. Things will get tough, yes, there'll be plenty of bloodshed and tears, that's for sure, but - hey! - who said computer games aren't meant to be rock hard?

A suitable prize for this Hired Guns compo hasn't been easy to find. We were going to furnish you with an M16 or other weapon and ask you to assassinate a prominent politician until Dave pointed out that we'd probably get into trub with the coppers and 'sent down' for a long time. When we reminded him that, as Editor, any legal obligations sit firmly on his shoulders and that if anyone was going to be sent to prison then it would be him - which we'd quite like - he told us to shut up.

Another idea we had was to give away a portable CD player with long, stilt-like legs, complete with a copy of Axl Rose's latest waxing (Highered Guns 'N' Roses, you see) but once again our humourless boss thwarted our plans and marched us out to the company carpark.

"You sl-ags," he shouted, spraying a sea of spittle over the posh new cars that all the big-wigs had recently acquired. "If you don't come up with a stonking prize in the next half a second then I'm going to sack you all."

Jenny's eyes began to fill up with salty tears, Matt's bottom lip began a-quivering, my legs turned to starwberry flavoured jelly. Could this really be the end?

Nah. Thankfully the pressure proved an asset and quick-thinking Jenny, not bothered by the prospect of unemployment, picked up a carelessly discarded A5 leaflet she'd spotted which advertised the 'fun' sport of paintballing.

"Why not have a day's paintballing for the winner and a friend as the prize?" she suggested, "you'll use guns and probably race up high hills all day."

"Brilliant!" shouted everybody except Dave. "Let's do that."

"Fume," thought our Ed, "if it wasn't for those meddling kids..."

THE COMPO

Okey-dokey, down to business. To stand a chance of playing paintball against both us and representatives from Psygnosis all you have to do is correctly answer a few questions, write them down on a postcard or sealed envelope and send them to: AAA Compo, THE ONE, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, to reach us by no later than September 28th.

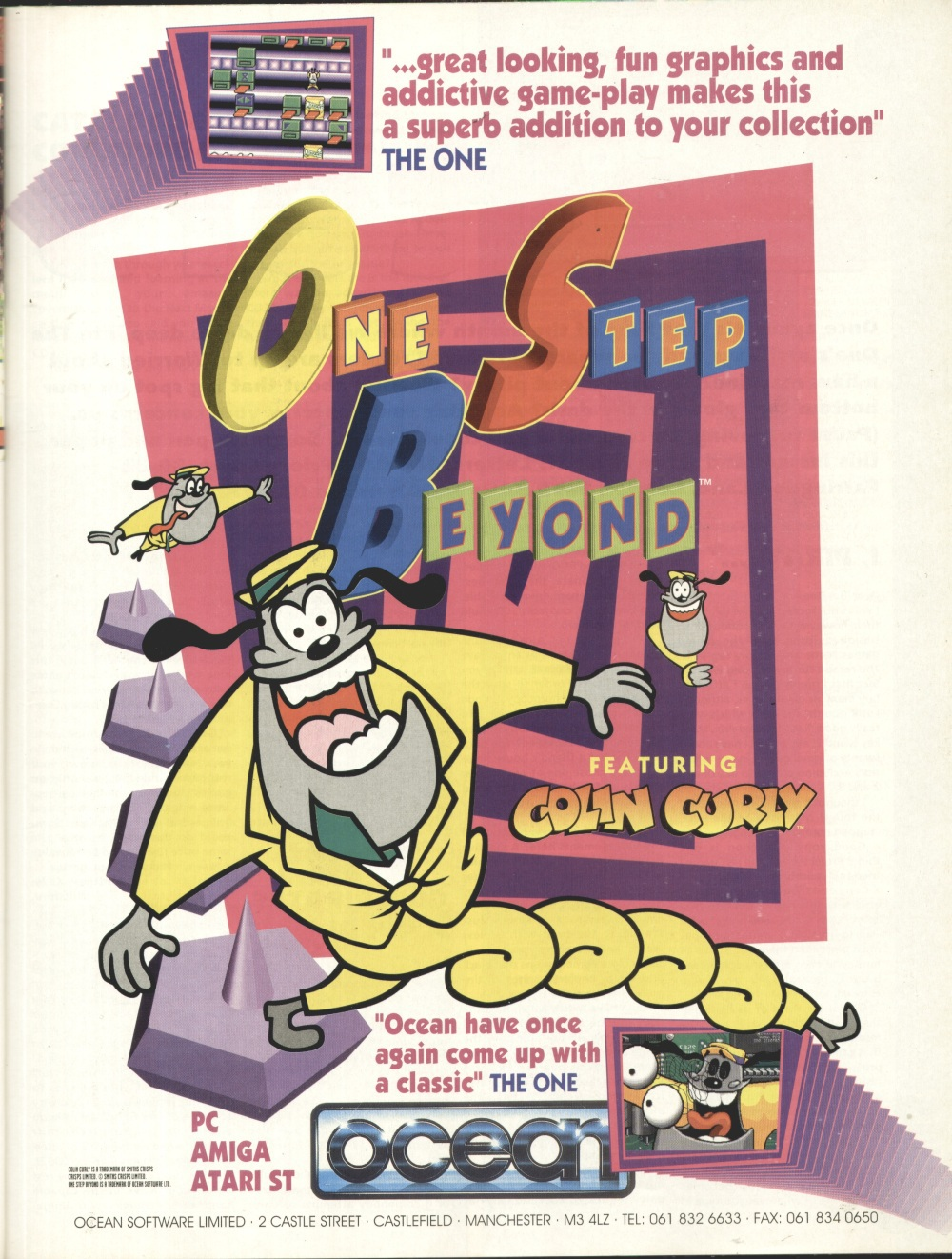
Then, apart from the little matter of actually getting your entry drawn from the over-large hat, the prize is yours. Psygnosis will pay for your travel expenses to the secret rendezvous where the action can begin (as long as you live in the UK, that is). Of course, if you aren't fortunate enough to win the first prize then don't your worry your pretty little heads, as there's always the chance you'll receive a copy of the game if you're fortunate enough to be a runner-up! Hooray all round!

AND THE QUESTIONS...

1 **What song featured the words "Higher and higher..." in its chorus?**
- (a) Temptation.
- (b) The Only Way is Up.
- (c) 99 Red Balloons.

2 **Last month's spine message "Guns, guns, guns" came from which film?**
- (a) Robocop.
- (b) The Guns of Navarone.
- (c) Annie Get your Gun.

3 **Which top programming team wrote Hired Guns?**
- (a) DMA Design.
- (b) Psygnosis.
- (c) Mark Blewitt and his mates.



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Letters

Once again it's that time of the month where we like to delve deep into The One's mailbags and see what our beloved readers are up to. Worried about a new machine? Worried about piracy? Worried about that big spot on your bottom that glows in the dark? Anything that concerns you, concerns us. (Pause for loving, sincere smile and cheeky wink.) So grab a pen and paper this instant and write to us at: Letters, The One, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU; or FAX us on: 071-972 6710.

I, PIRATE...

Dear The One,
I was until recently a 'pirate'. Since then, however, I've read about DMA Design quitting from the Amiga games scene and deeply regret it. The reason for my pirating was the fact that I simply couldn't afford to buy many original games, although I still bought the ones which were really good, like F1 Grand Prix, Monkey Island 2, etc. In fact I have about twenty original games in my collection, excluding programs like DPaint 2 and 3.

I thought it might be useful to list the things that have, in the past, stopped me from pirating.

Good copy protection is one thing. Project-X was the last game I tried to duplicate for a friend. I used X-Copy and then made an attempt at it with Blitzcopy - the one that comes with the PC880B power drive - all to no avail. I understand that most piracy and the greatest loss of money to the software companies is due to teenagers like myself who copy games for their friends.

Obviously, most of us have neither the hacking skill nor the resources to splash out on hardware that can copy them. This method of protection must work best, as I have not seen or heard of a single copy of Project-X circulating. This signifies that it must also be sufficient to stop the most hardened hackers.

Then there's the old 'type in a word from the manual' protection. With this it is possible to hack the game so it just becomes useless - whatever you type in the game works. I heard of a number of working F1 Grand Prix copies. It is unfortunate that the best games, usually hard drive installable, also have to be 'copyable'. CD could stop this problem.

Also some games, such as Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis, have a fairly short manual, which you need to have in order to start the game. Easy - just photocopy it. Code wheels are the same - it's easy to just take it apart, photocopy it, then reassemble it... Darkseed? The original I tried at a friend's house nearly always chose one of two words. Operation Stealth's idea was good - the goggles system worked very well.

Why not have a combination of the best elements here? A massive booklet (small pages but very thick would be preferable to large pages and fairly thin, as you can only copy one page at a time) printed on cheap paper to save money, just stuffed to the brim with useless words and numbers, possibly in such colour combinations that black and white copiers cannot distinguish the two.

Then have a disk which runs the copy routine as a boot disk that is needed only at key points in the game and for booting up the program. Have this guarded like Fort Knox when it comes to piracy in typical Psygnosis/Team 17 style - the aforementioned are renowned amongst many small-time pirates for the blistering copy protection their games sport.

For hard drive users, everything but the boot disk is installed and is only requested occasionally at points which will not 'interrupt the flow' of the game. I can't see any problems with this idea and would be grateful if you would print this and possibly pass on the idea to the softcos if it will in any way redeem my past crimes.

For the idea to be really successful though, the game would have to be released at a low price. I'm not sure if D-Generation was a success, but I certainly didn't hear about any copies of it. And what do you think of these ideas?

How about a feature on the subject? It might make some pirates think twice before continuing their activities.

Anon Ex-Pirate.

And talking of piracy...

GIVE PIRATES A COLD!

Dear The One,
Whilst reading some of the letters in your magazine about computer piracy I came up with an idea how to stop it. This idea of mine is virus protection. When a person is copying a game, a virus is put on the criminal's computer making it totally useless. This could be done if a program was put on the disk that could tell if information is being taken off it out of its own operating system (Team 17's PDOS for example).

I think that the virus should also be downloaded on to the computer if somebody attempts to enter the program's code, in case the person was trying to remove the protection program (or off-disk copy protection for programs that are hard drive installable).

I know that this idea has a few flaws that would have to be solved (such as virus checkers) but if this idea worked it would boost game sales and the pirates would have to buy a new computer boosting Commodore's sales as well!

Can I also add that I would like to see a hardware and utility section in your magazine? I know your response would be "we only do games" but you could make a separate magazine for hardware and utilities included in The One. If you could do this and keep it at the same price it would be better value than any other Amiga magazine.

**Matthew Kelly,
Wiltshire.**

It's an interesting idea Matthew but, as you admit, it does have a few flaws. For a start the 'virus' you propose is practically intelligent - after all, how would it be able to 'tell' someone was trying to hack into the code? Also, it seems a little unfair to penalise people who may be innocently trying to make back-ups of their disks by killing their Amiga!

As to the inclusion of techy stuff in The One, well, your guess as to what our reply would be is pretty accurate, it has to be said. We do occasionally touch on techy stuff but only when we think it's of interest to games players (like the CD32). Printers, hard drives and all the rest we'd rather leave in the capable hands of our chums on CU Amiga.

CATALOGUE CONUNDRUM

Dear The One,
I woke on June 26th in a sweat and with a feeling of joy, for it was time to go down the newsagents and pick up my copy of The One.

After reading through your excellent magazine and foaming at the mouth over your amazing coverdisks, I got to the Next Month section where you said you might have more news on the new Amiga CD thingy.

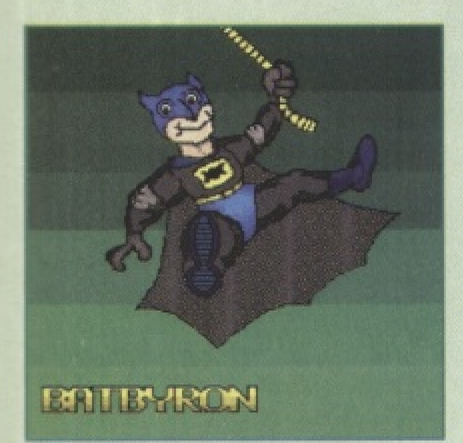
You can imagine my shock when the next day I was looking through my mum's newly delivered club book and, what should I see, but the new Amiga CD32.

How can Commodore give information on the new CD to a bloody catalogue that doesn't know the difference between a crap blue hedgehog and a god like Guybrush Threepwood but not say anything to you in time for the July issue?

What also gets me is the fact that there was no advertising for the CD32. Surely Commodore learnt their lesson from not hyping the A500, A600 and A1200?

Ben Meads, Rugby.

SUMMERTIME BLUES



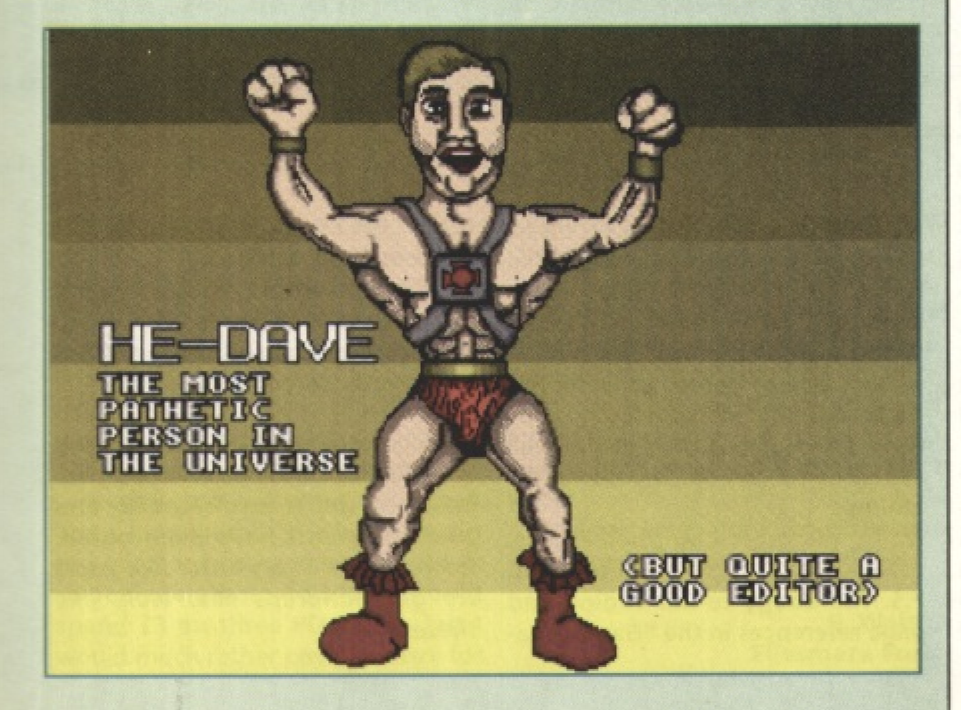
Dear The One team,
Summer holidays are great but they can become long, boring and incredibly bizarre. On one long, boring, incredibly bizarre day I became fed up with doing nothing in the garden and so decided to so nothing in my room instead. Before I knew it, I had booted up DPaint 3 and was making some interesting squiggles on the screen of my TV. Lo! These things represented The One team! How incredibly bizarre!

Upon pouring more and more lavish detail onto the squiggles, the resemblance became uncanny. I popped both this note and the disk containing the pictures into an envelope and sent it to you. This may relieve the tedium for you. Or then again, maybe it won't.

The incredibly bizarre Neil Jack. Fife, Scotland.

Where do you get all your energy from, Neil? Thanks for the piccies, though, especially mine - I always tell everyone that it's muscle, not fat, but they just won't listen.







P.S. Please can I have a signed photo of the lovely Jenny 'Beauty' Abrook because she's heavenly and also one of Upchurch so that I can put it in the garden and scare off all the cats.

To be fair to Commodore the reason we found out about the CD32 after the catalogue people is simply that their publications have to go to print a long, long time before they appear in people's letterboxes. For obvious reasons Commodore was keen for the catalogues to include the CD32, so they took the risk that they might be published before the machine's official unveiling. As it happens it was a risk that didn't pay off, with the catalogue people pipping us and other computer magazines to the post. Ah well, never mind.
P.S. I was all ready to have a signed photo of Jenners winging its way to you until I read your second comment. Now you can go sing for it, ugly.

LETTER FROM CANADA

Dear The One,
I'd like to comment on an interview with Kelly Sumner I read in your February issue. He mentioned that business in the USA wasn't doing too well. Well, I'd like to talk about my city, Toronto. Although it isn't part of the US, it is the sixth largest city in North America and I think the Amiga is doing quite well here.

In my school alone (only 400 people) there are 50 Amiga 3000s and 2000s which we use for an hour a week. On top of that half of the people in my class own Amigas, two of which are A1200s. Although the Macintosh and IBM may sell more units, the Amiga is by far a better machine. (Hear, hear! - Ed.)

I would also like to talk about something else that the person interviewing Mr Sumner said. They said that companies like Sierra and LucasArts were losing interest in the Amiga. I have to point out that they were wrong about Sierra. I recently wrote a letter to them asking why they had stopped producing games for the greatest platform there was. The reply I received was that they were losing business but that they were now producing most of their games in 256 colours which the Amiga couldn't handle.

This got me mad - haven't they heard of the A1200 or A4000? Why are they still producing games for IBM's 16 colour EGA computers when the Amiga's graphics are far superior? I was wondering if you could clear this up for me. Will Sierra begin to make Amiga games again after more games have switched over to the A1200?
Jan ($12.00 - £6.00 per issue)

Schotte,
Toronto, Canada.

Thanks for the letter, Jan - it's always good to hear from fellow Amiga gamers overseas. It's true that LucasArts have stated that it won't be doing any more Amiga games but Sierra will be returning to the fold soon with King's Quest VI, as we reported last issue. Hope that news cheers you up!

CHEAPER GAMES!

Dear The One,
I am writing in response to L. Jones of Bedford in the August issue, or anyone else who has the same gripe for that matter. He/she complaned that games are too expensive at £30 but if you'd had a good look through The One you'd find that the various mail order services around charge prices with as much as £10 knocked off. Indeed, I bought the excellant Body Blows for just £17. Some retail outlets do charge more than the actual game price but with mail ordering you can't go wrong, providing you send the order to the right address!

Richard Labbett,
Leicester.

Hey, top tip Richard. A wise shopper is a, er, happy shopper. Or something.

DISK-UST!

Dear The One,
I totally agree with L. Jones' comments in the August issue regarding the pricing of your magazine and the use of cover disks. I object to paying such a price for The One simply because it has a couple of disks containing crappy PD games and a demo on the cover. Granted, sometimes a game is okay but please, leave out at least one of the coverdisks, lower your price and let me choose for myself which games I wish to buy.

Despite my objection I still buy The One because of its quality editorial content, but there must be a lot of people not as daft as myself (I lack the market research to prove this) who would purchase The One if the price was right - i.e. fewer disks, lower price - and many may also swap across from the (then) more expensive competitor magazines.

The argument that cover disks give a taste of games to come is a good one but I would say your review section does this just as well as any demo can do. Thanks for listening.

Campbell Purvis,
Edinburgh.

P.S. The dodgy colour coding and page references in the "Games Featured" list of my August issue had me completely baffled.
P.P.S. Your dry and witty title and response to Paul Jones from Wrexham's inanely-obvious observations last month were most hilarious.

Sorry you're not too keen on the disks Campbell. We're constantly reassessing our coverdisk policy and your comments have been noted. However, for every letter like yours we get hundreds like, well, like these...

THERE ARE MOR

Our readers don't like to beat around the bush, in fact some of them prefer to just send us lists of questions rather than string sentences together. So here's a selection of those probing queries along with some concise answers...

Dear The One,
I have some questions for you:
(1) Will Ultima VII or Ultima Underworld be released for the A1200?
(2) When will Ambermoon be released?
(3) Are there only English clubs teams in Goal!?

Lasse Linno Henriksen,
Aarhus, Denmark.

(1) Not in the foreseeable future. However, EA, who now own Origin, are currently working on an A1200 version of Wing Commander so maybe the chances are not that slim...
(2) Why not turn to our 'Where are you Ambermoon?' feature on page 54 and find out?
(3) Seems so, Lasse. Sorry!

Dear The One,
I have a couple of questions to put to you:
(1) Being new to the Amiga I missed out on the joys of Jimmy White's Snooker, but now I see Archer McLean's Pool has also been released. Which of these is more worthy of my hard-earned cash?
(2) With my copy A600 I got a copy of Deluxe Paint III. However, as I do not have a numeric keypad how do I use perspective?
(3) How can people compare Sensisoccer and Goal! It's like comparing Liverpool and Accrington Stanley (who are they?).

Allan Heywood,
Ashurst, Lancashire.

(1) They're both great games so it's really up to you. Which game do you enjoy playing more - snooker or pool? I prefer pool, myself, but that's only because I has a mispent childhood.
(2) Er, you can't, I'm afraid.
(3) I agree.

Dear The One,
I am writing to ask you about adventure games:
(1) Is there going to be a Monkey Island 3?
(2) Why do Sierra convert their brilliant PC games so crappily on the Amiga?
(3) What is the secret of Team 17's success?
(4) Is there going to be a hard drive for the A1200?

Paul O'Brien,
Co. Cork, Ireland.

(1) LucasArts haven't announced it yet but I suspect they're thinking about it. If it happens, though, it's unlikely to make it onto the Amiga - unless the CD32 takes off...
(2) Gawd knows - it's probably due to the fact that they were converted by Americans who tend to be a bit sloppy in their coding. However, King's Quest VI is being converted over here in Blighty by Revolution Software, so that should be a lot better.
(3) Good games.
(4) Commodore don't have any plans to fit hard drives into the A1200, preferring to leave it to



E QUESTIONS THAN ANSWERS...

third-party hardware dealers like Silica and SDL to do it for them.

Dear The One,
Could you please answer the following niggling questions.
(1) Where has Alien 3 got to? None of the local shops stock it.
(2) Are US Gold going to release a data disk for Street Fighter 2 so that you can play the end-game bosses?
(3) Where can I get hold of Team 17's Full Contact?
(4) How can I stop software companies from keeping my ideas for themselves (and getting no recognition) if I send some in?

Andrew Tudor,
Cheshire.

(1) Alien 3 has been finished and ready to ship for ages - indeed, we reviewed it way back in January. Unfortunately it got caught up in the deal between Virgin and Acclaim, where Virgin were negotiating the rights to publish all Acclaim's titles on floppy. Also held up were Krusty's Super Funhouse and Bart vs the World. Now that the deal's been finalised expect to see them all out soon.
(2) Not as far as we know.
(3) Try hunting around the software shops. Failing that, phone Team 17 on (0924) 291867.
(4) It's unlikely that any reputable software house would do such an underhanded thing. If you really want to cover yourself put a copy of your ideas in an envelope, post it to yourself but don't open it - the envelope will get date-stamped so you'll have some proof that you had your ideas when you say you did if any problems arise.

Dear The One,
I have a few questions for you:
(1) Are Rage going to make a sequel to Striker? I thought it was brilliant but needed more depth.
(2) How much will it cost to upgrade from a 500 Plus to an A1200?
(3) How much will it cost to upgrade a 500 Plus so it will run CD software?
(4) Out of the two above which would be the best idea?
(5) Is anybody going to make a conversion of WWF Wrestlefest coin-op?

Jonathan Clarke,
Swansea.

(1) So a little bird tells us, yes. More news soon.
(2). Er, £299 - the price of a new A1200. Unfortunately it's not really possible to put new chips into an A500 Plus and 'turn' it into an A1200 - it'd probably work out more expensive than buying an A1200 from the off.
(3) You can add an A570 CD-ROM drive to your A500 Plus now which will allow it to run CDTV-compatible software. However, if you want CD32-style specs you've got to buy either a CD32 or an A1200 and an A1200-dedicated CD drive (which, it should be pointed out, isn't yet available).
(4) Neither, really. You've either got to choose whether you want to buy an A1200 (and hope the CD drive comes out soon) or a CD32.
(5) No.

Dear The One,
I have a couple of questions ask you:
(1) Both Flashback and Desert Strike got 93% but in your opinion which is best as I can't afford both?
(2) Will Electronic Arts be making Bulls vs Lakers and EA Hockey for the Amiga?
(3) How does Goal! compare to Sensible Soccer? (I thought you said you had a couple of questions? - Ed.)

C. Goody,
Taplow, Berks.

(1) Do you like super-slick arcade adventures or do you prefer strategic shoot-'em-ups? Answer that and you'll have answered your own question.
(2) There was talk of a conversion of EA Hockey some time ago but as far as we know that's been put on ice for the time being, more's the pity.
(3) In the office we prefer Sensi just because it's a lot easier to pick up and play, but if you're willing to put in a bit of time and effort getting used to Goal!'s control system then that's a very satisfying alternative.

Dear Geezers at The One,
I have thought of some questions of which, to be brought to light.
(1) Can you tell me what the Bitmap Brothers are working on?
(2) Do you know what Team 17 are planning for the A1200?
(3) Do you think that Team 17 are better than the brill Bitmaps?
(4) Is there really going to be a Lemmings 3?
(5) Do you agree that the excellent Superfrog kicks several tonnes of sloppy cack out of Zool?
(6) Are Nippon Safes Inc. and Abandoned Places 2 worth buying?

D. J. Owens,
Crawley, Sussex.

(1) Yes - a game.
(2) Body Blows, Alien Breed 2 and Body Blows 2, with no doubt loads more in the pipeline.
(3) I refuse to answer that due to the fact that they're all mates and I'd hate to offend.
(4) Yes, according to Psygnosis, but there are no firm details as to what it'll be like yet. (Perhaps now I've told you that I should stick a flash on the cover saying 'Lemmings 3 gossip inside' or something similar?)
(5) Oh yes.
(6) If you like graphic adventures and RPGs then definitely.

Dear The One,
I have a few questions to ask you:
(1) Will a keyboard be available for the Amiga CD32. If so, when and how much will it cost?
(2) Will a floppy drive be available for it?
(3) Will you be able to plug a mouse into the CD32 to use art and word-processing packages?
(4) Will you be able to plug a printer into it to print out your work?
(5) Will the new six-button SNES-style joypad be able to work (all six buttons separately) on the A1200?

Tom Moss,
- Sevenoaks, Kent.

(1) Well, there's an expansion port built into the CD32 designed to take peripherals just like that so probably yes. However, I've no idea when it'll happen or how much it'll be.
(2) See the answer above, please.
(3) Yup.
(4) Yup.
(5) Provided that the software is designed to read the CD32's joypad then there's no reason why not.

DE-ISK-LIGHTED!

Dear The One,
I write in support of coverdisks. In a world where the average game costs £25 any extra games found on your coverdisks are welcomed with open arms. I, and I'm sure others too, do not mind spending an extra quid or so for something to play. I could spend £3 on three PD games but I would much rather pay 75p extra for a good selection of PD games on your coverdisks.

In response to L Jones' letter, his attitude towards coverdisks is the same as software pirates - cheap and cheerless. If he can't afford full price software, why does he try to throw away the chance of loads of PD games for a small extra cost? I don't know.

So I say keep the coverdisks and keep those PD games coming in.

E. Walsh,
Ellesmere Port.

P.S. A third coverdisk at no extra cost - why complain?

Dear The One,
After reading last month's brilliant as ever issue and playing the superb coverdisks, particularly Trex Warrior, I feel I have to write in to defend coverdisks on magazines.

Although the console mags might be a good two pounds cheaper, usually (unless they happen to put a crappy video on the front showing an over-hyped hedgehog or plumber or something) their readers have to risk paying £40 to see what a game is like unless they test it first. And they have to put up with mags full of crappy pictures of Sonic and Mario and sad writers with even sadder haircuts who think they're trendy.

So please keep the magazine the same because my other friends who have got Amigas and read The One agree with me on this.

M. R.,
Middlewich, Cheshire.

CD32 IS GO!

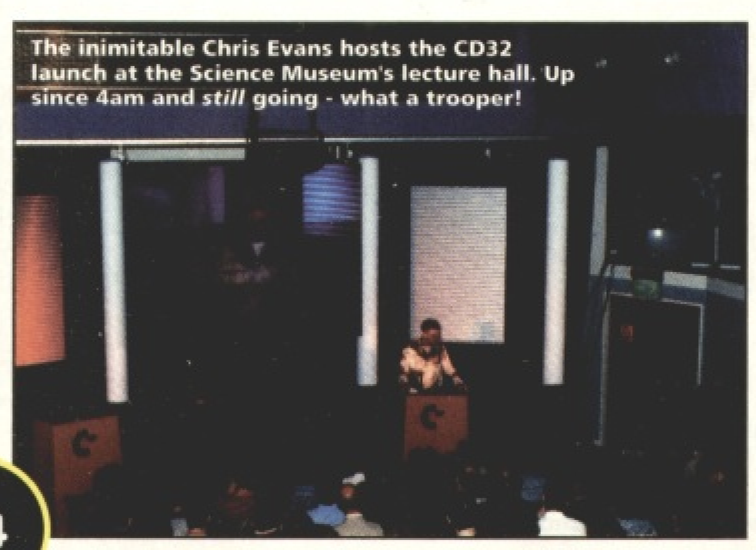
The CD32 is the most important development in the Amiga range yet. With its awesome power and massive data storage potential the gaming possibilities are endless and very exciting. This month, following on from last issue's overview of the machine's specification, we preview the games lined up for the machine and see what you, the public, think about it. First, however, we kick off with a report from the CD32's official launch party and see how the machine compares with its Sega rival, the Mega CD.

It's July 16th 1993 and a momentous, possibly historic, event is taking place. I'm not, I hasten to add, referring to the UK release of Jurassic Park (although that's what all the national papers seem to be concerned with, especially the fact that Princess Di jumped in her seat during the premiere and - thank goodness - she WILL allow Harry and Wills to see it) but the official unveiling of Commodore's Amiga CD32 to the world's press.

Momentous? Historic? What makes this machine launch any more important than, say, that of the Super NES, or the A1200 for the matter? It's just a games console, right? Well, yes it is, but the machine's potential is huge, especially if Commodore get the Full-Motion Video add-on ready in time.

If they do that and, with some aggressive marketing, manage to get the machine into the hearts, minds and wallets of all the Sega- and Nintendo-besotted consumers across the world then the CD32 could well become the world's first truly mass-market, all-round home entertainment system, a machine that'll let everyone, from Junior up to Granny, play sophisticated interactive entertainments (that's 'games' to you and me), listen to music CDs and watch laserdisc-quality movies.

So you see this isn't simply the launch of a new games machine, it just could be the start of something very, very big...



The inimitable Chris Evans hosts the CD32 launch at the Science Museum's lecture hall. Up since 4am and *still* going - what a trooper!

...Which probably goes some way to explaining the huge crowd of journos and industry types milling around the entrance to the Science Museum's Lecture Hall, where Commodore have decided to hold the launch. And they're not just computer industry bods either - there are hacks present from several major music mags and even Universal Pictures has a representative there somewhere.

The intended 12pm kick-off comes and goes the crowd gets restless. As 12:30 comes around the thronging masses get even more ugly - by now they've had as many cups of coffee and mouthfuls of biscuit as they can stand and are keen for Commodore to Get On With It. Just before a major riot starts the Lecture Hall's doors swing open at last and the show, it seems, can begin...

It soon becomes apparent that the launch is massively over-subscribed. The several hundred seats in the auditorium are rapidly filled and within minutes it's literally 'standing room only' - annoying, maybe, for those with tired legs but a definite vote of confidence for Commodore.

David Pleasance, Commodore's joint MD, takes his place on the podium at the front of the auditorium, his face projected large on a giant video wall behind him. Here is one all-too-visibly nervous man. You can't blame him, though - the room is full of people with one thought on their minds: "Come on, Commodore - Impress us."

After a short introductory speech David hands over to their celebrity guest MC for the launch, the Big Breakfast's Chris Evans. Chris, who seems to have more energy reserves than the national grid, bounds onto the stage. He conducts a brief Q&A session with the audience about the success of the Amiga computer range, 'rewarding' wrong answers with a squirt from a high-powered water gun. Hilarious for those in the back rows, not so funny for those up front. Serves 'em right for getting the best seats.

Eventually Chris hands over to Medhi Ali, the President of Commodore International, who's


Chris Evans is obviously impressed by the CD32 that David's holding. "Can I have my fee now?" he asks.

travelled all the way from the States to attend the launch. Quite what he thinks of Chris and his very British sense of humour is unknown but one's things for sure - the audience are lapping it up. Medhi spouts some more Commodore history then introduces Lew Eggebrecht, Commodore's Vice President of Engineering and the man who was instrumental in the CD32's development. Lew takes us through the machine's specifications.

Now, as much as I'm sure that Medhi and Lew are very nice people and all that , I think they'd agree that they're not the world's most gifted orators. This, combined with a few technical glitches on the video wall and the fact that we still haven't even seen the damn machine 'in the flesh' yet, results in some shuffling in seats from the luminaries (at least, from those that've actually got seats). In fact, at one point Chris nods off, which is no doubt down more to the fact that he's been up since 4am rather than he finds the speeches dull.

Thankfully the ever-bubbly (when awake) Chris keeps the event moving along and things improve greatly when Lew shows off the capabilities of the CD32's Full-Motion Video add-on using the video of Seal's 'Crazy', and very nice it looks and sounds too - even on the massive video wall the definition of the images is razor sharp. There are definite murmurs of approval from the crowd.

Suddenly the house lights dim. Dry ice rises from the stage floor. This, we suddenly realise, is it. As 'Fanfare For The Common Man' (or something very similar to it, anyway) booms away in the background, shutters beside the video wall slowly draw back to reveal... the machine! As the music builds to a crescendo, the price of the CD32 is revealed - £299, including VAT. There are yet more murmurs of approval.

Following this 'stunning' unveiling, we're treated to a short preview of some of the games forthcoming for the machine. Mmmm, Psygnosis's Microcosm looks good... Flair's Oscar, or Trolls 2, is shaping up nicely - very Super NES... Er, Robocod (didn't that come out a couple of years ago?)... Millennium's Diggers, which will hopefully play a lot better than it looks... And, um, that's it. David Pleasance also reels off a long list of other games in development, which is thankfully rather more impressive than what they showed.

Finally the launch is at an end. We all filter out of the hall and head upstairs to a private room where we can actually get our hands on some demonstration machines, sup some drinks and tuck into some nibbles. The general opinion seems to be that, some technical hiccups aside, the launch has been a success. The journos are impressed. However, that doesn't mean a lot - buy a hack a drink and they'll like anything. No, the real acid test will come in September when the CD32 goes on sale to the general public...

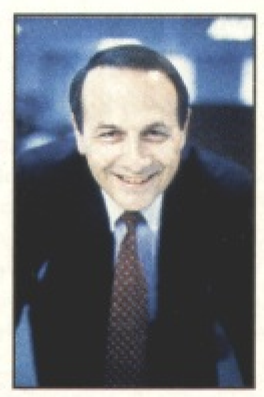
DOES CD32 PASS THE TASTE TEST?

Or, in other words, we present a side-by-side comparison between the CD32 and its rivals, the Philips CD-i machine and the Sega Mega CD. We've also included Commodore's CDTV, the CD32's forefather, for completeness. It makes very interesting reading. Honest.

	CD32	CDTV	CD-i	Mega CD
Price (RRP)	£299	£299	£499	£399 (inc. Megadrive)
Architecture	32-bit	16-bit	16-bit	16-bit
Main processor	68020	68000	68010	68000
Processor speed	14MHz	7.14MHz	16MHz	12MHz
On-board RAM	2Mb	1Mb	1Mb	64K (Yes, really!)
CD-drive speed	Double	Single	Single	Single
CD audio support?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Colour Palette	16.8mill	4096	16.8mill	512
Max. colours on-screen	256	32	256	64
TV output?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Composite video output?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
S-VHS output?	Yes	NTSC only	Yes	No
Keyboard exp. socket?	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Floppy drive port?	No	Yes	No	No
Standard joystick ports?	Yes	No	No	Yes
Average software price?	£30	£30	£50	£50

So there you have it. As you can see the CD32 gives performance on par with the much more expensive Philips CD-i machine and far exceeds that of the relatively feeble Sega Mega CD. In addition the CD32 has huge expansion possibilities. The only real advantage that the Mega CD has over the CD32 is its dedicated sprite chip, which allows for some impressive sprite-scaling and rotating effects. However, the CD32 has an ace up its sleeve... see the panel below.




(From left to right) Here they are - the brains behind the new Amiga CD32: Medhi Ali, the President of Commodore International; David Pleasance, joint MD of Commodore UK; and Lew Eggebrecht, the Vice-President of Engineering at Commodore.

NEW AMIGA GRAPHICS CHIP!

Something that Commodore have been very quiet about is the presence of a new graphics chip inside the CD32. It's got huge implications for 3D games but to understand how important it is you've first got to understand how the Amiga's graphics are displayed, so get your techy heads on.

The Amiga's display is stored in what's known as 'bitplanes'. That means that in 256-colour mode the colour data for each pixel is stored as eight seperate 'bits' of information spread out over eight different areas or 'planes' of RAM. While this has several advantages for games involving sprites and parallax scrolling it's not so good for 3D games, as drawing one 256-colour pixel takes eight individual writes to memory, one write per bitplane.

On the PC each 256-colour pixel is represented by a byte of memory, so a pixel's colour can be changed by a single write to memory. Although this is far less flexible than the Amiga's display it has the advantage of being quick, which is why you see so many texture-mapped, Gouraud-shaded 3D masterpieces on PC.

What this new chip inside the CD32 does is take byte values and convert them into their bitplane equivalents very, very quickly. Basically that means that you could create a mock PC-style screen in memory, use it to do all your 3D work and then use this new chip to convert the 'fake' screen into a 'real' Amiga screen.

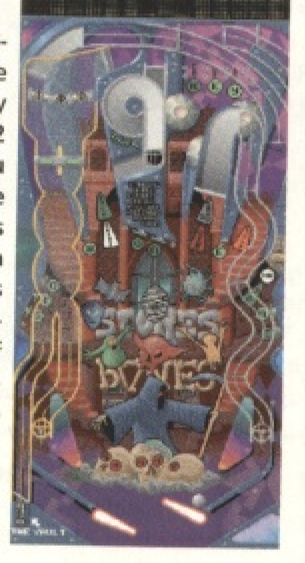
Who knows? One day we see Strike Commander on the Amiga after all..

WE WANT

You can produce the best games machine in the world, but if there's no software available for it the chances of it being a success are minimal to say the least. Luckily it seems that won't be situation with the CD32. Simon Byron spent, ooh, half an hour tops phoning around the various software companies to see what they've got planned...

21st CENTURY

You'll find Pinball Fantasies reviewed this issue but that's not the only pinball game the CD32 will be treated to. You see, the sequel to the sequel of Pinball Dreams will definitely appear on the wonder-machine as soon as is humanly possible (the beginning of next year, probably). Pinball Illusions, as it will be called, will feature - yes! - multiballs along with the same fluid gameplay we've come to expect from 21st Century.



BULLFROG

The CD32 version of Syndicate, Bullfrog's ultra-violent futuristic blaster, will be exactly what the A1200 version (which won't be happening) should have been. The A1200 version was shelved when the programmers realised that all the extra colours and sound effects they'd hoped to be implementing for the 32-bit floppy-based machine would slow the game down beyond belief.

But the brilliant thing about the CD32 is it has a special bytes-to-bitplanes converter (for full details see page 25) which apparently will help speed things up no end. Now Bullfrog can up the colours, add more sampled sound effects without detracting from the game one bit. You'll be able to check for yourselves when the game is released at the end of the year.

Also planned is a new title called Biosphere, where you have to guide a team of planet builders as they try to make various inhospitable planets fit for human habitation. More news on that soon. It's also likely that the game provisionally titled Populous Village which was previewed back in May's issue will now only appear on the CD32, again due to the power of the bytes-to-bitplanes converter.



SYNDICATE (Bullfrog)

CORE DESIGN

The Derby-based wonder boys have no plans to release CD32 software in the foreseeable future. They will, however, play close attention to the machine's sales and if there's a boom (which, if there's any justice, there will be) you can bet that you'll see a fair few Core games on CD.

ELECTRONIC ARTS

Nothing definite just yet, but EA assure us that they're keeping an eye on the success of the CD32. When we suggested that perhaps they could write a good version of Wing Commander, which is already being converted to the A1200 (see News), they said "we might."



OSCAR (Flair Software)

FLAIR SOFTWARE

At the time of writing it looks likes Whale's Voyage and 1869 (both reviewed last issue) will be wriggling their way onto CD, as will the rather smart-looking Oscar, a very Super NES-ish platform game. For more info, see the Work In Progress on page 49 of this very ish.

GREMLIN

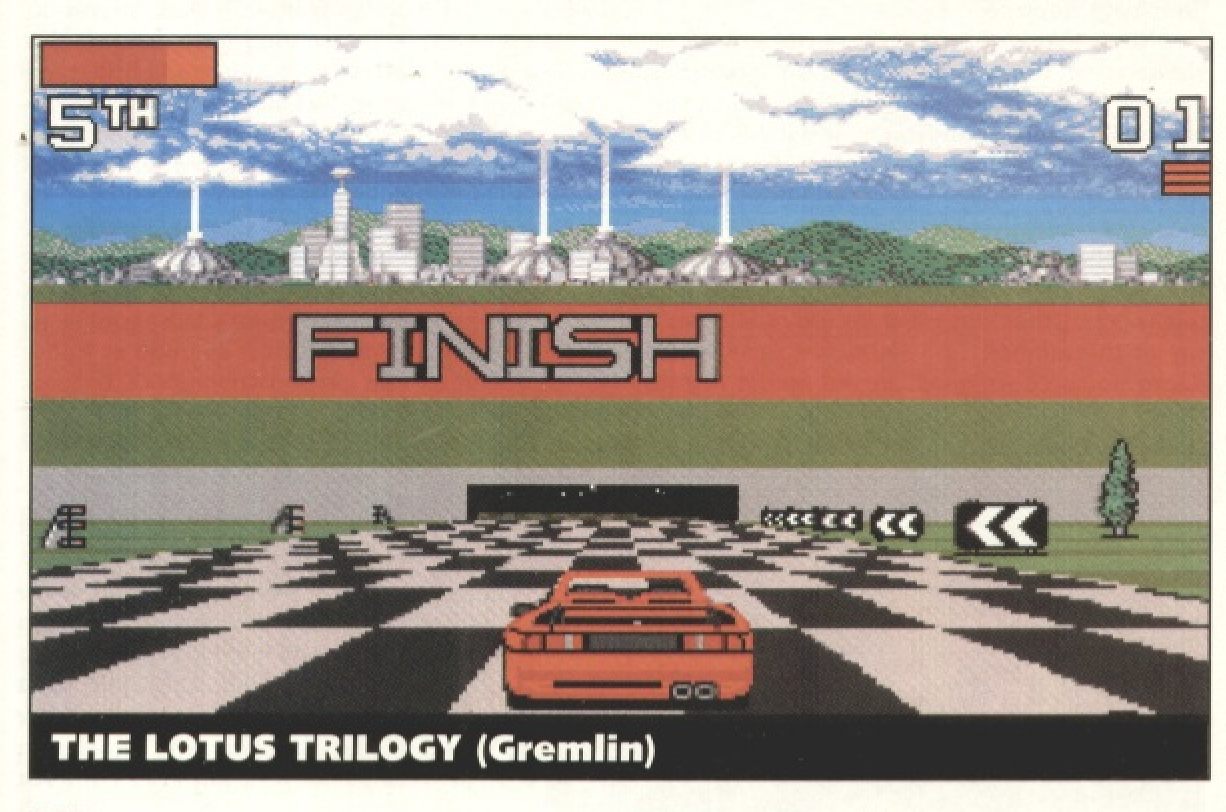
The Sheffield software company has numerous games in development but, as usual, the obviously well-informed spokesperson who answered the phone was impressively tight-lipped. What's certain, though, is that the Lotus trilogy will appear on one disc, possibly with a fresh lick of computer paint as well as a CD-based soundtrack

We can report, however, that Zool 2 will be one of their first CD32 games and from what we've seen so far it looks like a right corker. The graphics are crisper, the levels larger and Zool has been completely redesigned, giving the graphic artists far more scope for humorous animations.

Talking of which, the ray-traced intro and in-between animations are mind-blowingly impressive. Each has taken ages to render (all being drawn using a complex art-package which we couldn't quite understand) but, believe us, they are completely brilliant and certainly show the machine off to its full. Find out for yourselves when the game is released at the end of the year.



GAMES!



THE LOTUS TRILOGY (Gremlin)

ICE

ICE will be supporting the CD32 but details are scarce at the moment. It appears that many of their current titles will make it onto the CD-based machine but there aren't any of those concrete facts we know you love to report for the time being. What we're sure of, though, is that Total Carnage will undoubtedly make it onto Commodore's newest addition and if Akira doesn't rear its not-unattractive head sometime around Christmas then we promise to eat out trousers. Well, Matt will.

KRISALIS

Almost certainly the best platformer of the year, Soccer Kid, will be Krisalis's first CD32 release. When we were informed of this we were taken back a little - after all, how can they possibly make the game any better?

Well, in terms of gameplay you'll find nothing new. The game will feel and play virtually identically to the standard A500/600 versions. It's not known at this time whether or not there'll be a complete graphical overhaul (with 256 colours - you know the kind of thing) but we can confirm that there will be a CD soundtrack to drive you ever onwards, along with the sixth zone the A1200 version will include.

However, one thing the A1200 owners will miss out on (along with the rest of us, of course) is the five minutes of broadcast-quality animations which will kick the game off (ahem). Some Japanese company has been beavering away on this mouth-wateringly tasty aspect of the game and we're assured that it will be unlike anything computer owners have seen before.

Forget crappy computer generated intros - this is the 90s, man! Tim James, Krisalis's Marketing Director (who's been desperately trying to get a quote in The One), informed us that booting up the CD32 version of Soccer Kid will be like watching an episode of Danger Mouse - the quality will be that good! Of course, it will be the lovable Soccer Kid you'll see and not the rugged rodent and his assistant, but that's just as brilliant, we reckon.

And that's not all. No, missus, not by a long shot. Remember Sabre Team? Good, wasn't it? If you were with us back in October when we reviewed it you'll know that our only criticism of the game was the overly-long delay between goes. It wasn't so bad that Sabre Team became a chore to play but it was irritating none-the-less.

Not any more. The CD32 version (which will be slightly preceded by a specially-enhanced A1200 version) literally whizzes by - there's just a two or three seconds waiting time at tops, and that's even before the game has been optimised. Not only that but the graphics are being beefed up, animations inserted wherever possible and billions of extra levels have been created.

And, and, and if that wasn't enough, Krisalis have employed one of the blokes who does the film trailer voice-overs to recite the mission objective so everything will be crystal clear before you embark on some top SAS killing. Sometime around Christmas is the ETA.


SOCCER KID (Krisalis)

MICROPROSE

Another software house that isn't giving anything away (least of all to your investigative reporter) is MicroProse. Yes, they will be supporting the CD32 but unfortunately things are so top secret that no information is currently available. We've discovered that there definitely are some titles being developed for the CD machine as we speak (Legacy and StarLord, perhaps?) but the chance of getting anyone to own up is virtually nonexistent. Politics, eh? Who needs it?

MILLENNIUM

The Cambridgeshire-based coders are obviously keen to support the CD32. Already prepared for launch is Diggers, which is reviewed later in this issue, and James Pond 3 (humorously entitled, as I'm sure you're aware, as Operation StarFi5h) will burst onto the scene in a cou-

ple of month's time with stunning graphics, a brilliant James Bond theme (which, we're told is very 'jazzy' and not at all like the original James Pond music).

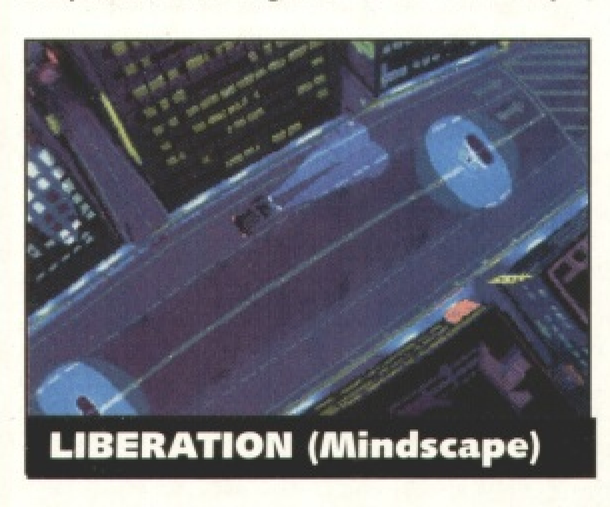
If there isn't a huge intro animation then we'll be more than surprised considering the amount of time Millennium has spent on artwork and stuff (have you seen the la la la la la Look-In cartoon series?). In fact Dave's heard that Millennium have commissioned a fully ninety minute motion picture to be stored on an additional disc, but that's because I just made it up and told him.


DIGGERS (Millennium)

Oh yes, I almost forgot. A beefed-up James Pond 2 is also scheduled, although details are scarce at the moment. More news if and when.

MINDSCAPE

Liberation (née Captive 2) is the only confirmed CD32 title, although Mindscape stress that they are keeping a beady eye on the machine. So if you rush out and buy loads of CD32s then Mindscape will publish loads of games for it. Presumably.


LIBERATION (Mindscape)

OCEAN

Ocean have got literally four titles they're prepared to tell us about but we're promised there'll be some more information pretty damn soon.

The first is Sleepwalker, the overly-milked Comic Relief tie-in from earlier on in the year. Unfortunately, though, the CD32 version will be exactly the same as the A1200 version. No extra comedians chipping in, no extra levels, no... nothing, really. Still, the game scored fairly impressively when we reviewed it a few months back so it will still be worth a look.

Ryder Cup will follow shortly after. Written by the Really Interesting Software Company (the team behind the oh-so-average International Open Golf Challenge) the game is based around the Ryder Cup (never!), with the chance to play any of the last three Ryder Cup courses.

What's interesting about this golf game, though, is that you have to control a whole team as they battle it out for the world's most prestigious golfing trophy. After the not-fast movement of International Golf, the RISC have decided not to worry about amazing shading and all that kind of visual trickery but concentrate solely on speed and playability, which means that although the game won't be graphically overly-impressive it will at least be much more fun to play. According to Simon Alty at Ocean it's "great fun." Let's hope so.

DID are working away on specially enhanced versions of their already brilliant-looking 3D games, TFX and Inferno. Both will feature extra anims, CD-based soundtracks and loads of extra missions and look sure to set new standards for future flight-sims when released in October and February respectively.

As well as those four, though, rumour has it that next summer will see a whole string of CD32 releases but that's as much as we're allowed to say at the moment. All right, we'll come clean damn you, it's as much as we know. Are you happy now?

PSYGNOSIS

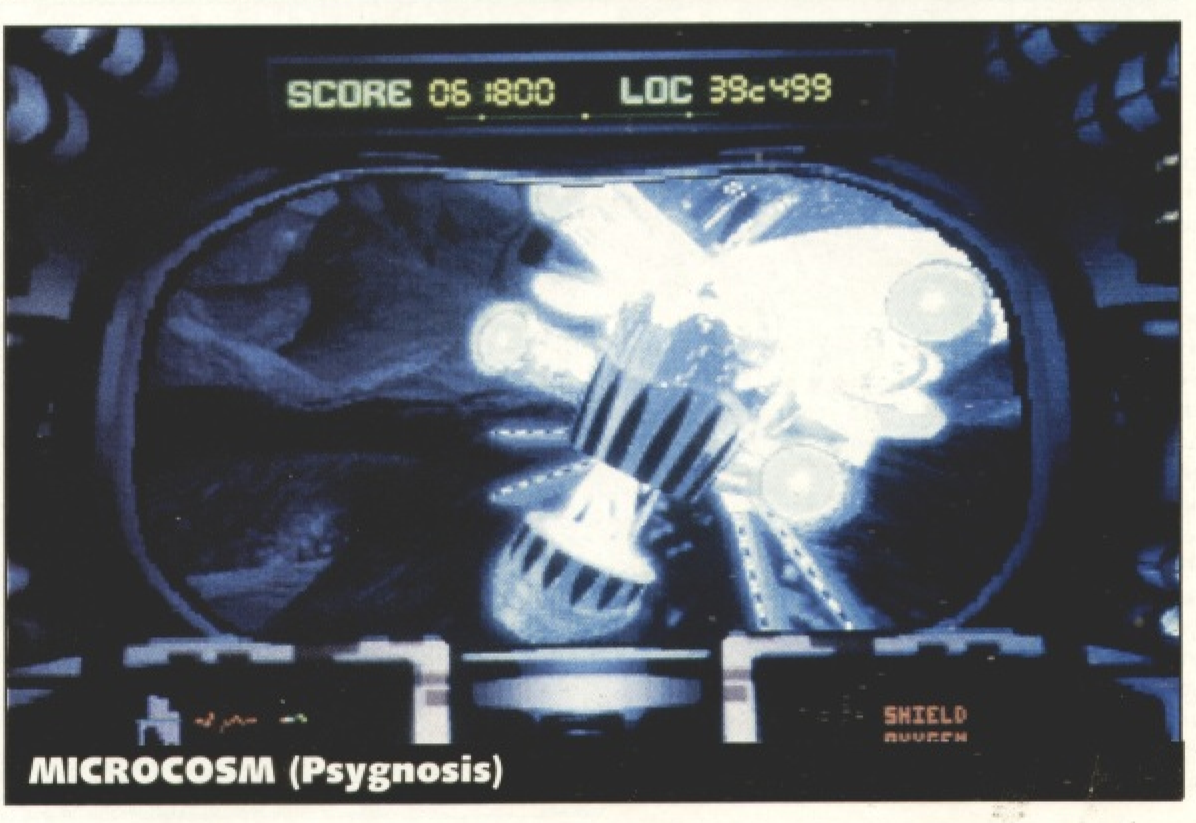
Remember how thousands of Amigas were sold on the strength of Shadow of the Beast alone? Well, Microcosm looks sure to do virtually the same thing for the CD32 - Dave says it's the most impressive thing on the CD32 so far and he knows everything about games. In fact, he should be writing half of this feature with me but, as usual, Mr Delegation has passed the whole of the buck to someone else. Anyway...

Microcosm will undoubtedly show the machine at its best. Graphically, you'll find none better with animated backgrounds which put the Mega CD to shame. The gameplay is rumoured to be top-notch but because no-one here has actually had the pleasure of playing Microcosm yet we can't neither confirm nor deny that. Sorry.

Bram Stoker's Dracula, however, is not so certain. One minute "Yes it is coming out on the CD32" then "Hmm, not sure, let's talk about Lemmings or Sony." Your guess is as good as mine.

But don't let that get you down, as CDTV Lemmings works on the CD32! Hooray!


TFX (Ocean)



MICROCOSM (Psygnosis)





THE CHAOS ENGINE (Renegade)

RENEGADE

A CD32 version of the Chaos Engine is being worked on as we speak with 256 colours and CD music accompanying the intro. What you won't get, though, is a specially written CD-based audio track playing throughout the game as there's no way of making the sonics interactive like the floppy version. Who cares - Richard Joseph's original soundtrack is the best we've ever heard on an Amiga.

And, yes, Sensi Soccer will probably make it's way to the CD32, although nothing is confirmed as of yet.

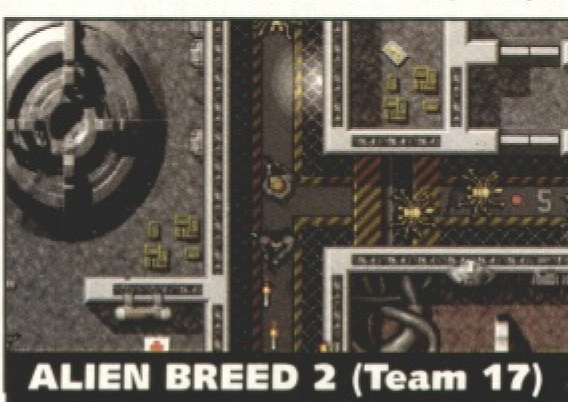
SACHS ENTERTAINMENT

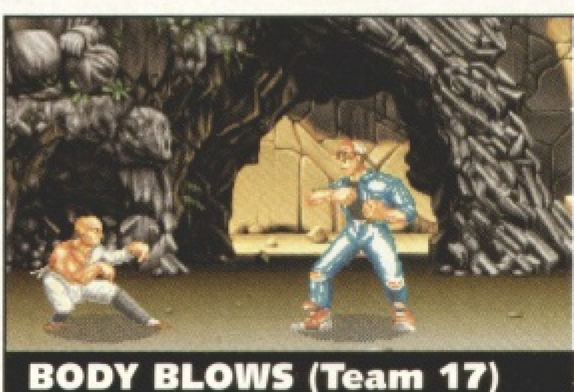
Little is known about this lot apart from the fact they're in the throes of developing Defender of the Crown 2 for the CD32, the sequel to the classic Cinemaware game that, like Shadow of the Beast, helped flog Amigas in their millions. If the Sachs Entertainment boys can do the same for the CD32 with Crown 2 then I'm sure Commodore would be delighted.

TEAM 17

Yes indeedy doody! The much-awaited Alien Breed 2 will be Team 17's first CD32 release and although it won't be released until early next year it's bound to be well worth the wait. But, as you've probably guessed, there aren't many details to report. Hurrumph.

By a strange twist of fate, Body Blows 2 is in the same situation - not much information apart from its release date which will be early next year.


ALIEN BREED 2 (Team 17)


BODY BLOWS (Team 17)

In fact, little is known even about the standard version which still hasn't progressed far beyond the initial design stage but you can bet that we'll give you the full lowdown when there's a little more to see.

Martyn Brown also stressed that although Team 17 have only announced two games there are loads of ideas flying around which will no doubt end up on CD32. One of these is the original Body Blows, but that's still to be confirmed.

THALION

I've got one word to say to you; Lionheart. Yup, an extra-special version of the already extra-special platform-ish game is due for release towards the tail-end of the year. According to Tony King, joint Managing Director of Thalion UK, it will be really good. Well, those weren't his actually words but when we looked up the phrase he used (we don't understand rude things) we found out that it will be the 'quadruped of various breeds allied to wolf and fox's pouch enclosing the test...'.

No Second Prize will be their second (ha-ha) CD32 release. Expect nothing less than super-smooth courses and additional detail and sound when the game is released early next year.


LIONHEART (Thalion)

US GOLD

We rang US Gold to find out what they're doing on the CD32 but the person we normally deal with was on holiday. We do know that there's a special version of Flashback planned with extra anims and all the usual enhancements you'd expect from a CD-based game. In fact, don't be surprised if it turns out much like the recent PC version, only better because it's on an Amiga. Obviously. Should be good, anyway.

VIRGIN

Virgin Games are currently "evaluating the situation," so make of that what you will. Dune 2 would be brill, though, as would Mortal Kombat. But the one we'd really like is The 7th Guest which Virgin recently put out on PC CD-ROM. *Please!*

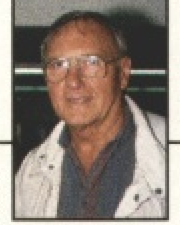


CD32 BRILLIANT OR CRAP?

Right, you've read about the launch and you've seen all the games you can expect but what do YOU think about the CD32? Obviously we can't ask the lot of you (although by God we'd like to), so Simon Byron took a long trek down to London's Virgin Games Centre with a few snaps of the machine to have a chat with a dozen unsuspecting punters about Commodore's latest and greatest machine. Here's what he discovered...



JOHN DAVIS



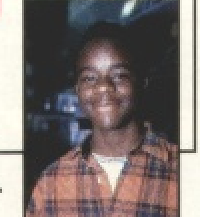
John Davis, 60; commercial artist; CDTV owner.

What do you think of the timing of the CD32's launch?
"Quite good, really. It's coming up to winter, when people will want to be spending more time inside. You do get a bit annoyed about new machines coming out all the time, especially when it effectively puts your machine prematurely out of date."

Are you going to be buying a CD32?
"I shall look at it, certainly. I don't really know that much about it at the moment, but I'll definitely keep my eye on it."

What would persuade you to upgrade?
"The use of better graphics coupled with more games at a reasonable price. It all depends what the software support is like, doesn't it?"

MARVIN EJOVU



Marvin Ejovu, 12; still at school; Amiga 500 owner.

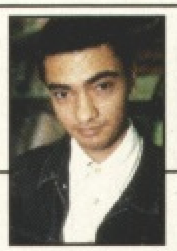
What are your first impressions of the CD32?
"Yeah, it looks good, although a lot like the Mega CD."

What do you think of the joypad controller?
"I like it. I think it will make the games easier to control and it shouldn't break like joysticks tend to.

Do you think the CD32 will be a success?
"Yes, Amiga owners are likely to rush out and upgrade. It's a bit expensive, especially for kids, but I'll certainly be telling my parents about this. All the games will have better graphics and sound, which should also make people want to buy it."

If you could have any game at all from any format converted onto the CD32, what would it be?
"Street fighter 2, definitely - mainly because you'd be able to use the joypad, making it more like the arcade and SNES versions."

ISAIAH MOSES



Isaiah Moses, 21; student; Amiga 500 owner.

What are your first impressions of the CD32?
"It looks quite good, but will it have the software support of the Sega or Nintendo? The CDTV didn't do too well, did it?"

Do you think the joypad control system is wise?
"I'd rather use a joystick, personally. I've played the Sega quite a bit and I find it quite hard to control."

Does it annoy you that Commodore keep releasing new machines?
"Yes. The Amiga 500 plus didn't last that long, then came the A600, the A1200 and now this. I hear there are yet more in the pipeline and I'm sure some people are not sure which one to buy."

So do you think you'll upgrade?
"Yes, definitely. The Amiga 500 is virtually dead - you can't get that many games for it now. You need a faster machine to play the games that most people expect nowadays."

Do you think £299 is a fair price?
"No, it's far too expensive for this kind of machine. I think it should be priced at £199."

Will it do well?
"It does look like a games machine so it should do well - if the software is there, that is. I think that most games don't utilise the Amiga's hardware to its full, something I hope they'll change for the CD32. I hope to see far superior graphics with brilliant gameplay, but whether or not that will be the case is another matter."

If you could have any game from any format converted onto the CD32, what would it be?
"Wing Commander 2, because it's a really good game and the Amiga version of the first Wing Commander was far too slow. The CD would hopefully make it a much better game for Amiga owners."

PAUL DOODY



Paul Doody, 23; student; Amiga 500 [1.2] owner.

What are your first impressions of the CD32?
"It looks a lot like a Sega Mega CD. Obviously everyone has to get into the CD market at the moment to stop Sega going and monopolising it, but I think will take some time to take off."

Does the fact that Commodore keep releasing new machines annoy you?
"It'll probably annoy my mate because he's just gone out and bought a Phillips CD machine and he can't get any games for it! At least this will be a Commodore machine, so hopefully the software companies already developing for the Amiga will do so for the CD32."

FEISAL ANOOAR

Feisal Annoar, 20; head of information technology in the retail division; Amiga 500 owner but "looking to get a A1200."

What are your first impressions of the CD32?
"It looks a touch square, resembling a MegaDrive."

What about the joypad?
"I think having all those buttons on the pad is a good idea. They open up the possibilities - take Street Fighter 2, for example. You could do so much more in the SNES version because of the six-button joypad. The only problem is that Amiga owners are used to joysticks, but once you've played with a joypad for a while it becomes a doddle."

How much do you think it costs?
"Well, it's 32-bit, effectively an A1200 with a CD drive lumped in it and nothing else. If it's trying to compete in the console market then I think that £200 would have to be the absolute maximum. Any more and you might as well look at an actual Amiga system like the A1200."

Well, it's actually £299. What do you think of that?
"If I was going to spend £299 on a console then I'd get a Sega or Nintendo, but only because I've actually seen them running, whereas I haven't seen the CD32 in action. If I definitely wanted to spend £299 on an Amiga then I'd buy an A1200 and look at adding a CD drive at a later date."

Do you think it's being released at the right time? "Yes, I think it's quite good because we're running up to Christmas - it's certainly not as far away as people think. If you go too late then you'll spread yourself out too thin - people will think 'Ah, I'll get a MegaDrive because that's got a good software base.' I think that by releasing now Commodore will hopefully be able to build up a solid software base and people will be able to see that when they make their purchasing decisions."

What will you expect from CD games?
"Well, I've used the MegaCD and have found out that the games don't live up to the machine's capabilities - there's too much arty-farty intros and sound effects which is all very pretty and looks really nice but where's the value for money, where's the quality play that you should be entitled to? As for the CD32, I'd like to wait and see what the games are like. I'm sure that the machine will be something special."

What item you own would you bet against Commodore launching a new machine within the next year?
"At the very most, my socks. These guys are pros - they know what they're doing."

What do you think of the joypad control system?
"I dunno, really. A lot of people have probably seen the Sega and so will be used to playing games that way. I'd be happy with a joypad because I'm getting a bit annoyed with joysticks - they're out of date now."

Do you think the CD32 will be a success?
"Probably, but it will take time. I think there'll be quite a few people buying it when it's released, but the majority of sales will come around Christmas time when kids start to think about what presents they'd like."

Are you going to upgrade?
"I probably will, but I expect I'll keep my Amiga as well. I'm interested in CD gaming but I don't think there's enough there to keep me permanently occupied. If a few Sierra or LucusArts games are converted onto it then I'm more likely to be tempted. Hopefully this machine will tempt LucusArts back to the Amiga - after all, there's much more you can do with a CD."

What will you look for in a CD game?
"Better graphics and playability. Movie tie-ins should be better because you'd be able two have loads of digitised footage. I'm really into graphic adventures so there'd be no more disk swapping and they would would load faster."

Can you describe the Amiga's next two years?
"Hopefully there'll be a lot more games coming out, with better graphics, sound and playability. And hopefully everything will be better than on the new Atari machine."

ANDY PRIEST



Andy Priest, 23; postman; Amiga 600 owner.

What are your first impressions of the CD32?
"It's aimed more at games players, obviously, as it looks like the MegaDrive. I think people will get confused between this and the Mega CD."

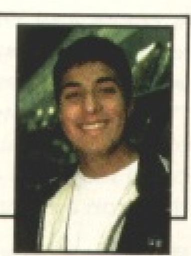
Does the fact that Commodore keep releasing new machines annoy you?
"Well, they know they've cornered that end of the market so they're aware that this CD machine is going to sell. You can't blame them, really - they obviously want to make money."

So will the CD32 be a success?
"It's aimed at the same market as Sega and Nintendo so hopefully the people who are interested in those two systems will take a look at Commodore's machine."

Do you think that £299 is a fair price?
"I think that's a bit steep - it could put a lot of people off."

Are you going to upgrade?
"I might do, it depends. I'll have to take a look at how much software is available for it before I decide."

ALI TAVASSOLI,



17; student [doing chemistry]; Amiga 500 owner.

What are your first impressions of the CD32?
"It's bloody ugly. It's a good machine but it doesn't look as good as the Mega CD. I'd make it more aerodynamic. At the moment it looks like a Robin Reliant - it should look like a MR2."

What do you think of the joypad?
"It's okay, I suppose, although I'd prefer it if they included a joystick with more buttons."

Does it annoy you that Commodore are chucking machines out left right and centre?
"It was a bit silly to bring out the A600 because lots of people bought them and must be feeling very bitter and twisted by now. I haven't got a problem with them launching the CD32, but I do think the A600 was a waste of time. Commodore would have been better off releasing a CD drive for the A1200 at the same time, though."

Do you think Commodore will mess up the marketing?
"Yes, they're bound to - they always do."

What will you expect from CD games?
"Fast graphics, pretty pictures, nice sound - stuff like Monkey Island 2 with real voices. All that should be possible because of the double-speed CD drive."

Will the CD32 take off in America?
"No, Americans are [something very rude]. I mean, come on, anyone who watches things like Baywatch has got to be sad. They like PCs and they like Nintendos, but Amigas have never really taken off."

Can you describe the next two years of the Amiga in twenty seconds?
"Yes, there'll be another CD drive with a triple-A chip, 24-bit colour. The hard drive will become standard, and that's about it."

STEPHEN WREN



Stephen Wren, 17; still at school; Amiga 1200 owner.

What are your first impressions of the CD32?
"It looks like a MegaDrive - I don't think it looks very nice. I don't like the control pad at all - it doesn't look like the sort of thing I'd like to use. I much prefer a joystick - it's a lot easier to use."

Is £299 a fair price for the CD32?
"It will be all right for some people if they can afford it."

Are you going to upgrade?
"No, I don't think so, I couldn't afford it."

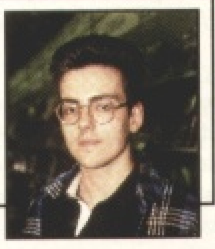
What will you expect from a CD game?
"Better sound, better graphics. I don't know much about the playability because I haven't played a CD game before."

Is there any chance that because the CD32 looks like a console it will appeal to people who already own consoles?
"Yes, I think it will do. Consoles tend to appeal to people because they think that as it's dedicated to games all the games will be better than those on a computer."

What age do you think Commodore should aim their advertising at?
"Under seventeen, I'd assume, because older people are into word processing and serious applications like that, whereas younger people are just interested in playing games."

If you could have any game from any format converted onto the CD32, what would it be?
"Super Star Wars, basically because I love Star Wars. My brother's got it and, although it's a bit easy, it's still an excellent game."

JASON BOXALL



Jason Boxall, 20; student; Amiga 500 owner.

What are your first impressions of the CD32?
"It looks like the Sega MegaDrive. It's got that certain 'style' which most games machines have."

What about the joypad control system?
"I don't like joypads - they just don't feel right when you're playing games. People have been using joysticks for years and I don't think Amiga owners will like the change."

Are you going to upgrade to a CD32?
"Nope, for the simple reason that I can't afford it. I might trade in my A500 for an A1200, but I haven't decided for certain.

Will people be annoyed with Commodore for releasing yet another machine?
"Yes. The A1200 came out for the same price I paid for my machine but with twice the specifications. Some people will obviously want the CD32 but others may think that another machine will be launched soon and hang on for that."

Do you think the CD32 will be a success?
"I don't think so. Most people have got Segas and Nintendos and the people who don't want a games-only machine will prefer a proper computer with a keyboard."

What will you expect from CD games?
"Very good graphics with fast accessing. And cheap - although they probably won't be."

What would you say to Commodore if they rang you up for advice for the future?
"They should concentrate on producing 'proper' computers and not games-only machines like this. If they do release any more consoles then they'll annoy the people who have supported them from the early days."

MIKE SMITH



Mike Smith, 33; banker; Amiga 500 plus owner.

What are your first impressions of the CD32?
"It's similar to the Sega one, which is a bad thing."

Do you think £299 is a fair price?
"From what I've seen so far it's superior to the Sega machine, so the extra £100 is probably worth it. Knowing Commodore, though, it'll no doubt come down in price as soon as it's released."

Do you think the CD32 will be a success?
"I couldn't really say. I've never seen one working so I'm not sure what they're like to use or what the differences are between a CD machine and a computer."

Are you going to upgrade to a CD32?
"No, I don't think so. Anyway, I can't afford to at the moment."

What would tempt you to upgrade?
"I couldn't really say because I don't think I want to. I like the Amiga 500 Plus, it's exactly what I want at the moment."

TERRY CHUNG



Terry Chung, 24; student; Amiga 500 owner.

What are your first impressions of the CD32?
"Hmmm, compared with the MegaDrive I think it looks quite 'complex'."

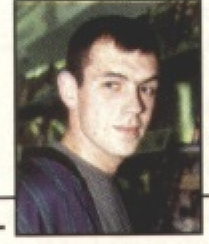
What do you think of the joypad?
"I prefer using a joystick - it just 'feels' a lot better."

Would you be willing to pay £299 for the CD32?
"I'd look at the software first; how much it's going to cost, whether or not there's a lot around, that kind of thing. If there's good software support then I'd consider buying it."

Will the CD32 be a success?
"With the Mega CD around, it's going to be difficult - especially when you consider that people can still pick up decent cartridge-based consoles for around £150 cheaper. It will all depend on the software support."

Do you think that software support will stop for machines like the A500?
"Yes, I think the A500 will go the way of the Spectrum, as programmers try to do more complex things. If this does happens I'll sell my machine and look into buying an A1200."

PAUL LONGHURST



Paul Longhurst, 25; fitter/welder; Amiga A1200 owner

What are your first impressions of the CD32?
"It looks quite good. I've always been an Amiga fan, I think they're excellent, so I expect that the machine is bound to be brilliant."

What do you think about the joypad?
"My friends have got Nintendos and I can't handle them! I'm much better with joysticks - they'd have been better off having a joystick with more buttons on the side."

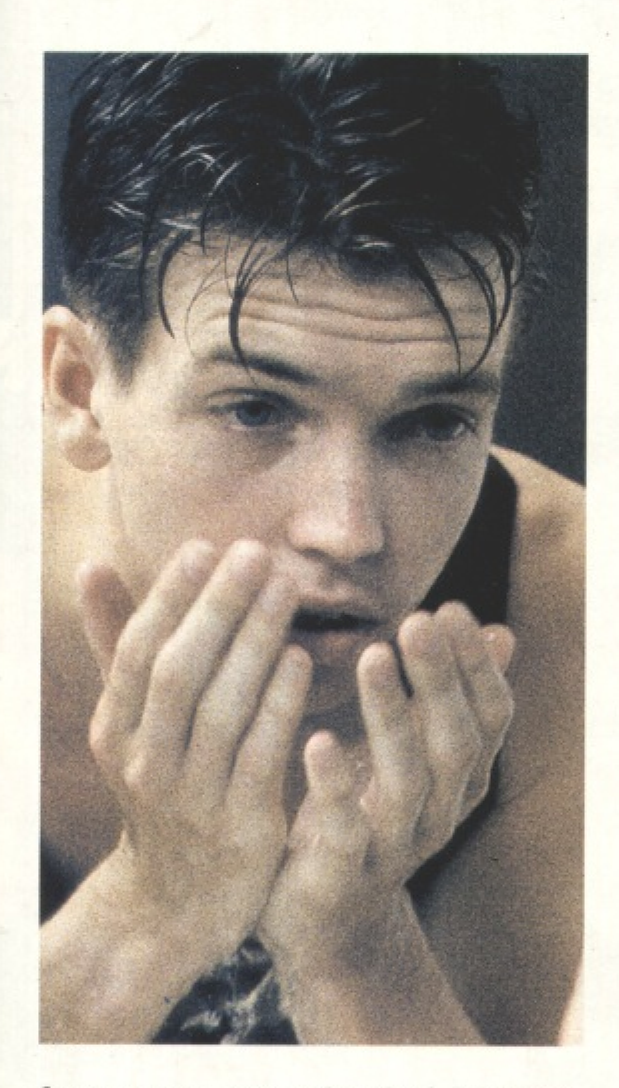
Do you think you'll be upgrading to the CD32?
"I've always liked the Amigas and if I wanted a CD then I'd definitely buy this one. The price is fair; you want the quality at an affordable price, which is what they've done."

Do you think the CD32 will be a success?
"They'll have to make sure that the games are worthy of CDs. The only thing I didn't like about the A1200 was that the games which were released for it didn't really fully use its capabilities. The only ones I saw were Sleepwalker, Zool and Nigel Mansell, which weren't that much different to the standard versions."

What age do you think Commodore should aim their advertising machine at?
"It's not really a kid's toy - the people who are likely to be buying the CD32 are going to be people in full-time employment. But saying that, kids these days seem to get whatever they want."



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WORK IN PROGRESS

'FREE SEX' it said above the door. Stanley scanned the street for familiar faces, his own face covered by the cloak he wore. Satisfied that no-one had recognised him, he quickly opened the door and entered the dark, stale-smelling passageway. A single neon sign lit his way as he walked towards the single door that was to be his gateway to salvation.

Heart pounding through his veins, he knocked on the door and waited for what seemed like an eternity. Finally the door opened, he gasped at the the strange form that greeted him - this wasn't what he'd expected. David Upchurch, wearing only a Jurassic Park cap, turned and said "Hello mate, wanna see this months Work In Progress?" And, of course, he did.



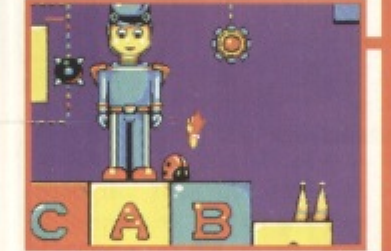
LAST ACTION HERO.......................................36

Arnie obviously hasn't learnt his lesson from last month's feature as he once again begs to be digitised, sampled and generally mucked about as his latest movie is turned into yet another game licence. David Upchurch muscles up to Psygnosis' latest project.

MICRO MACHINES.......................................40

"Hey!" they shouted, "d'ya fancy being shrunk down and racing over tables, desks and garage floors in little vehicles?" It all seemed like a jolly good idea at the time, so we volunteered Simon Byron. He drives too fast for my liking, but this is your only chance to view Codemasters latest conversion. Buckle up!





ALFRED CHICKEN.......................................42

The new platform offering from Mindscape features a characteristic little fellow who looks very silly and acts very silly. It seemed fitting, then, that Matt Broughton should be the one to take the wraps off this attractive eggventure. (Groan! - Ed.)

THEATRE OF DEATH.......................................44

Deceptive title though it may be, this is not an educational kiddies package presented by Sooty but in fact a violent little son-of-a-gun from Psygnosis. Simon Byron is rough and tough and ready to do the 'biz' in this war strategy sim.





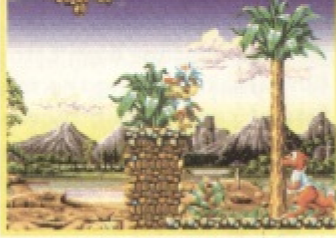
SEEK & DESTROY.......................................46

The One's version of Airwolf - Dave Upchurch - squeezes into the biggest chopper he can find and prepares for violence on a large scale. This can mean only one thing - Vision Software is getting ready to release its latest shoot-'em-up onto the waiting masochists... er, masses.



OSCAR.......................................49

Stunning graphics, well-'ard characters and groovy soundtracks are just around the corner when you're dealing with Flair's latest Zool-bashing release. Matt Broughton gets the wrong end of the stick and puts on his platform shoes.



MANCHESTER UTD PREMIER LEAGUE CHAMPIONS.......................................50

Winning the 'Longest Title Of The Issue' award, MUPLC is the latest release from Krisalis to be abbreviated to MUPLC. Simon Byron (SMNBYRN) does his best boots up nice and tight and spits a lot for the crowd.

GULP
SURF NINJA KIDS
LAMBORGHINI AMERICAN CHALLENGE
KINGMAKER.......................................52

Take two full pages and split them into two columns each, leaving you with four separate areas. Now take four up-and-coming games and arrange them neatly so that they fill the area. Sprinkle attractive pictures around the areas and leave to cool in a shaded area. Yes, Matt Broughton washes his hands first and offers you a taste of things to come.





There's only one man big enough to stand up to Arnie - our own David "I'll be back after lunch" Upchurch. So it was he who got the chance to take a look at the work completed so far on Psygnosis's big movie tie-in.

DID SOMEONE SAY...

PROJECT: Last Action Hero
PUBLISHER: Psygnosis
DEVELOPER: In-house
INITIATED: July 1993
RELEASE: Christmas 1993



(Above) "Waddya mean I was crap in Zorba the Greek? You were in The Golden Child so you can't say nothin"

(Top) Last Action Hero as it looks in binary form. Whether you'll have to face end-of-level nasty Anthony Quinn doing that stupid Greek dancing is unknown.

(Left) It's all action in Last Action Hero. Here's Schwarzenegger doing all his own stunts (probably).

(Below) Eye-eye! (A rather predicatble caption - sorry.)

"I'll be back."

Every sad journo who writes about Arnie or his movies has to put the Austrian Oak's most famous quote in their feature somewhere so I, being just as sad as everyone else, thought I'd get it out of the way nice and early. And while I'm at it I might as well tiresomely quote all his other 'humorous' sayings so that I won't have to trouble you with them later. Here goes...

"Hasta la vista, baby."
"No problemo."
"Stick around."
Er... "Big mistake."

Yes, you heard it right. "Big mistake" is, you see, the latest addition to Arnie's repertoire of brilliant one-liners. But while the others were typically uttered just before or after he shot someone in the forehead with a 12-bore shotgun or stabbed them in the throat with a Bowie knife, this latest utterance comes from Last Action Hero, Arnie's most recent big-screen outing, where we meet the new, caring n' sharing, man of the 90s Mr Schwarzenegger.

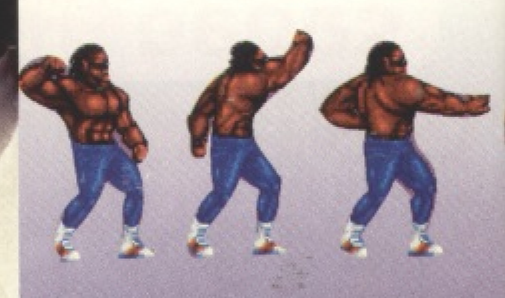
You see, the whole point, we're told, of Last Action Hero (or LAH to its chums) is that it satirises Hollywood's love of ludicrous, over-the-top violence. All the same, this oh-so-deep message hasn't stopped the film's makers filling the screen with lots of cars getting blown up and people getting shot. Do Austrian's have an equivalent saying to "Having your cake and eating it"?

The film's plot centres the adventures of a young boy, Danny Madigan, whose big-screen hero is Jack Slater, a tough cop who has to bend the rules a little to catch the scum making the streets unsafe for decent folk. Slater is (of course) played by Arnie. Somehow (and let's not go into it too deeply) Danny manages to get hold of a magic cinema ticket which allows him to pass 'though the screen' into Slater's fantasy world.

Before you know it Danny and Slater are in all sorts of trouble, as the film's villains steal the ticket and pass back into the 'real' world where they go about causing all sorts of mayhem. Somehow they've got to be stopped so Slater must enter the 'real' world too - but when he gets there he finds things don't work quite like they do in the movies...

Confusing? Too right. At one point Slater even meets Arnie play-





ACTION?

ing himself who, of course, plays Slater and... and... and...

Ooh, my head hurts. And it seems that's been the reaction of the movie-going public too. Although performing well in the States LAH is still not quite living up to expectations, with Jurassic Park pulling away easily in the 'Which'll be the Summer's big hit?' race. At the time of writing the film has only just opened here, and it'll be interesting to see if the slightly more sophisticated UK audiences take to the film.

So who would want the job of converting this surprisingly complex film into a game? Hands up Psygnosis. It seems that the Liverpool-based software stars are not afraid of a challenge, the main one here being that, in keeping with LAH's supposed anti-violence message, any licensed LAH products are not allowed to show Arnie using an offensive weapon of any kind. So out goes Arnie holding a gun, a club, a broken bottle or indeed anything that could be used to hurt, maim or kill. And this restriction applies as much to the computer game as it does to the toy dolls, the bedspreads, the plastic masks and the novelty fruit-flavoured lip salve.

Obviously, for a game based on an guns-'n'-explosions action movie that's quite a restriction. How on earth do you make a game out of it? "Looking at the film I think that you would agree that it's fairly action packed," says Tony Parkes, LAH: The Game's producer at Psygnosis. "We therefore attempted to capture that using a beat-'em-up scenario. What we have done to LAH is to introduce the comic element that was present throughout the film and make the whole game very cartoony in a 'Tom and Jerry' kind of way."

The game is split into six horizontally-scrolling levels, each taken from specific scenes in the film. So, while the first level sees you beating up muggers and hoodlums in Slater's fantasy film world, by the last level the action moves into the real world, as the baddies cause chaos at the premiere of Arnie's new movie (see the film if you want to know why!).

Columbia, the film company behind LAH, have taken a keen interest in the game's development from start to finish. Tony finds this a refreshing and encouraging sign of the times, when CD-based software is poised to bring cinematic-style entertainment into the home: "It's an indication of how seriously the studio are taking the interactive entertainment world," he says.

In particular, Columbia were particularly helpful in the project's early days. "When we sat down to design the original game Columbia supplied us with a script for the movie," explains Tony. "This was obviously very useful and gave us the backbone to the game."

Later, as the movie approached completion, Psygnosis were privy to some preview showings of the movie in a 'rough-cut' form. "Having seen the earlier versions of the movie we then had to go back and make some small alterations in order to try and capture the mood and feel of the movie," says Tony. "Columbia also supplied us with a great number of stills from the movie and this was a great boon to our artists."

At this point it seems as good a time as any to enquire what Tony thought of the film: "I thought it was a very good film with some great sequences and even the obligatory dinosaur in the background. [Having a pop at Jurassic Park, Tony?] My particular favourite was the Hamlet scene - brilliant!" (For those who haven't seen the film this is the bit where Danny is trying to brighten up a dull English lesson by imagining Slater (a.k.a. Arnie) as the Prince of Denmark, chewing on a fat cigar while blasting away his Shakespearian co-stars with a massive machine gun. Hey - that's what I call biting satire.)

What does Tony feel makes a good beat-'em-up? "A good partner to play with," is his emphatic reply. "There's nothing more rewarding than playing any game with a real opponent rather than some soul-less machine."

It's no surprise, then, to learn that there is indeed a two-player option in Last Action Hero. "The current options are Slater (Arnie), Whitney (Arnie's daughter in the film) and finally an animated cat [during the film Arnie is partnered by a Roger Rabbit-inspired feline detective]" says Tony. "Obviously they all have their own special moves, but I am leaving that as a surprise until you see the finished game."

As you might have noticed, Danny Madigan doesn't take part in the fumpin' fun - apparently Columbia felt that a young kid and a beat-'em-up just didn't mix somehow. Fair enough.

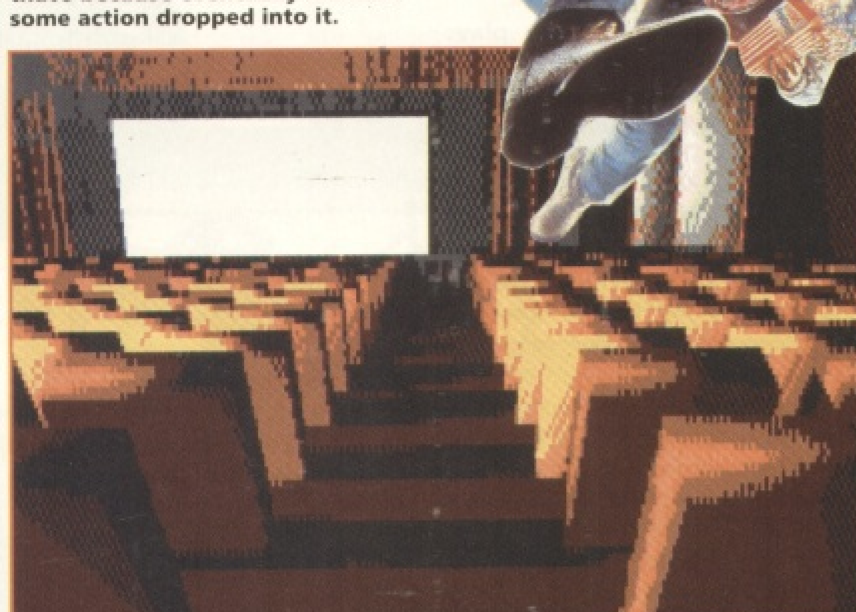
Tony is very much aware of the potential pitfalls associated with a film tie-in. It's a genre strewn with badly-conceived and poorly-programmed turkeys but Tony is confident LAH won't join them: "The larg-





(Left) Last Action Hero: The Game has a nifty two-player option so you and a friend can team up to save the world, both real and fantasy.

(Below) Between levels you're treated to a number of animations detailing the developing plot. If you're wondering why the screen's blank that's because eventually it'll have some action dropped into it.



er-than-life action and the use of humour throughout the movie make LAH an ideal game vehicle in terms of both plot and mood," says Tony. "It's not a case of drop the licence onto a game that has only a tenuous connection with LAH."

What are the difficulties in creating a licensed game (i.e. a movie tie-in)? "It depends. Some titles will obviously lend themselves to a computer game, others may have a rough ride in moving between mediums. The real crucial difference between an original game and a licence - be that a film, the Olympics, or whatever - is the time element. If the product does not hit the shelves at the right moment, then due to its transient nature you're going to have a tough time selling it."



"The real crucial difference between an original game and a licence - be that a film, the Olympics, or whatever - is the time element. If the product does not hit the shelves at the right moment, then due to its transient nature you're going to have a tough time selling it."

Tony Parkes
LAH's producer.

Development of Last Action Hero is leading on the Mega CD at the moment, with the Amiga version following soon after. It's early days yet, of course, but Psygnosis are promising a pixel-for-pixel conversion job. "Obviously there are going to be compromises made on the Amiga version," admits Tony. "The Mega CD has over 600Mb of on-line storage for the graphics, sound and code so something's going to have to give way. I don't believe that this will necessarily affect the playability of the product, both of which will, I believe, be great pieces of computer entertainment."

Given this huge volume of data LAH would seem to be an obvious candidate for conversion onto the CD32. Sadly, however, Psygnosis say there are no plans for a conversion to the new Amiga console in the near future. However, if the machine starts selling in bulk that position is very likely to change.

So what are LAH's chances? After all, the beat-'em-up genre is nothing if not crowded at the moment, with the much-anticipated Mortal Kombat and Body Blows 2 just around the corner. Last Action Hero, even with a big movie name to back it up, is going to have to be very good to compete. That said, it's already looking pretty smart and, with the skill and experience of Psygnosis behind it, Last Action Hero could well emerge as the surprise contender for the coveted Christmas Number One slot. Look out for it.



(Left) "Get down!" shouts out Arnie. "Do you mind - you've just spilt my popcorn and Kia-Ora."

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PROJECT: Micro Machines
PUBLISHER: Codemasters
DEVELOPER: In-house:
Charlie Skilbeck (Programming)
INITIATED: March 1993
RELEASE: October 1993

TANKS, BOATS

Quick, to the Tiny Machine - Codemasters' toy-inspired racing game is about to take pole position. Simon Byron waits for the green light.

The brilliant thing about computer games is that they often let you live out your darkest fantasies with absolutely no real-life consequences whatsoever. If you fancy taking a Stealth Fighter to the top of the world and then nose-diving into the ground, thus writing off millions of pounds worth of equipment, then by all means do so. Perhaps you're into journeying to the planet Hard and letting loose an arsenal which is comparable to the Big Bang, before returning safely home to a hero's welcome - not a problem.

But who in their right mind would aspire to assuming control of a miniaturised toy car and racing it around a schooldesk, avoiding hazardous rubbers and motoring over precariously placed rulers? It's not the most exciting concept ever, is it? The real playthings probably only reach a top speed of three miles an hour - and that's with an eight year-old propelling them along.

Well, think again. If you keep an eye on the other gaming formats then you'll no doubt be aware of the phenomenon that is Micro Machines. Nintendo and MegaDrive owners have been completely entranced by the game since Codemasters published it on their respective systems - indeed, the Sega version knocked Starwing from the Number One position in the Gallup All-Formats chart.

Not ones to miss a money-earning opportunity, Codemasters have finally turned their attentions to the Amiga version and, even at this relatively early stage, I have to say that it's shaping up to be one of the best top-down racers I've ever played. The semi-finished version the Codies sent us has been responsible for more lost work hours than any other game this month (yes, including Sensible Soccer).

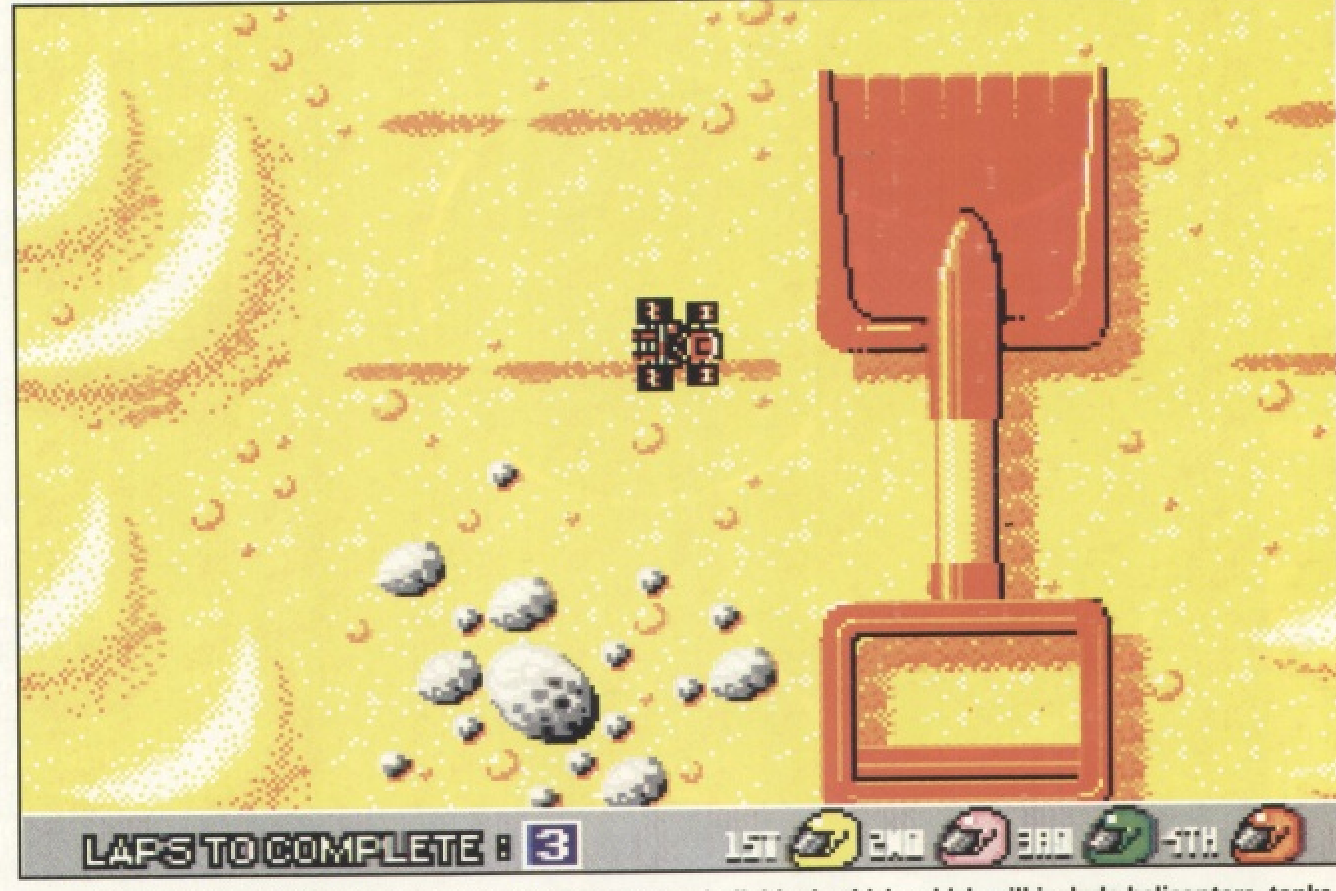
It's also been the cause of the worst rift between the editorial team that The One has ever witnessed. Dave, adult-minded and mature person that he is, declared that he cannot play the game against me any more because I kept knocking him off the school desk and stormed out of the room like a spoilt child. Ah, two-player games - we love them!

For a game of such quality Micro Machines will be spending a surprisingly short period of time in development. Much of this is due to the fact that it's virtually identical to the MegaDrive version, so most of the tweaks which make games like this so immediately playable have been implemented already.

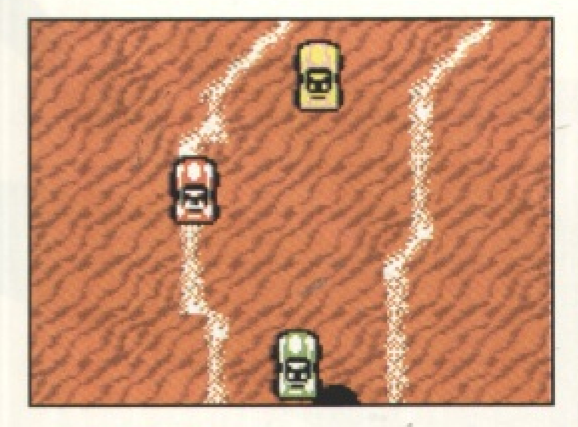
Charlie Skilbeck is almost single-handedly working on the Amiga version and he's even more enthusiastic than we are. "Micro Machines has got super-high speed action, lots and lots of tracks and a unique two-player mode. We've kept the speed exactly the same as the Sega version - we'd be fools not to considering the amount of time we spent tweaking it when it was in development. The game routines are exactly the same.

"The thing with Micro Machines is that there are plenty of vehicles to drive, all of which handle differently. The school desk and pool tables are remarkably fast, while the bedroom carpet is a lot slower - it's all really good fun," he enthuses.

He's right, you know - especially with two players. But before you start thinking of limiting split-screen races with both players getting forced into unseen traps, it's worth pointing out that Micro Machines just ain't like that. It works like this: the screen concentrates on the player in the lead but as soon as the slower car runs off-screen then the race is temporarily halted and the leader awarded a point. Once you've won enough points you're declared the winner and the bragging can begin.



There are nine tracks to race over, each with its own individual vehicle which will include helicopters, tanks, boats and racing cars, amongst many others. These races will take place in either the Bathroom, School Desk, Breakfast Table, Sandpit, Garage, Patio, Garden, Bedroom Floor or Pool Table.



The tracks are made up of building blocks which are eight pixels high and sixteen wide - and you can have up to one thousand of them pieced together, meaning that many courses will be some of the biggest ever seen on the Amiga. The way they're constructed means that Charlie can compact them to almost half their size but that could still be a problem for 512K owners.

AND AUTOMOBILES

The original designers opted for this system because the Nintendo couldn't handle a split-screen, but Charlie admits that this has worked for them rather than against. "Having a split-screen two-player mode would have made the game just like any other top-down racer. This way it's a lot more competitive because you're kept together."

With the Amiga being able to handle more complex screen routines, did Charlie think about including a four-player option? "I did, but it's a bit difficult because there are five keys per player to read, so that would be two joysticks and ten keys to keep track of. The Amiga keyboard often 'ghosts' [when you read the keys, certain combinations produce 'false' readings which imply that other keys have been pressed] and it's very hard to find ten keys which are roughly in the right place and don't ghost. The main problem with a four-player mode, though, is the screen thing. I suppose the person in the lead could get an additional point..." Charlie ponders, "...I don't know, I think we'll have to leave that possibility for the sequel, if there is one."

All this boundless enthusiasm is a real credit to the game, although Charlie was initially more downbeat when asked to crack on with the Amiga conversion straight after the Sega version. "I thought 'Oh no, not more Micro Machines' [title for a sequel, perhaps?] but then set about the task of converting the MegaDrive version as closely as possible. Apart from no parallax and slightly less colourful cars the two games will be exactly the same."

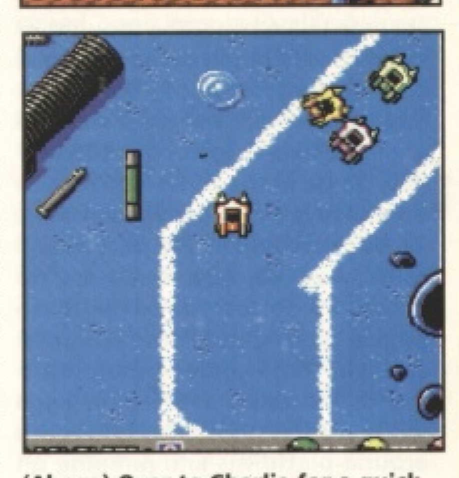
> **"Having a split-screen two-player mode would have made the game just like any other top-down racer. This way it's a lot more competitive because you're kept together."**
>
> *Charlie Skilbeck, Micro Machines' programmer.*

As for the A1200 version, Charlie hopes to include something special for 32-bit machine owners - if there's time, of course. "If we do an A1200 version then I'll make it so that the program detects what machine you've got and decides whether or not to load in the enhanced graphics and parallax, so A1200 owners won't need to buy a special version of the game. Hopefully we'll be able to do it like that, but we're on a very strict time deadline and I can't guarantee it."

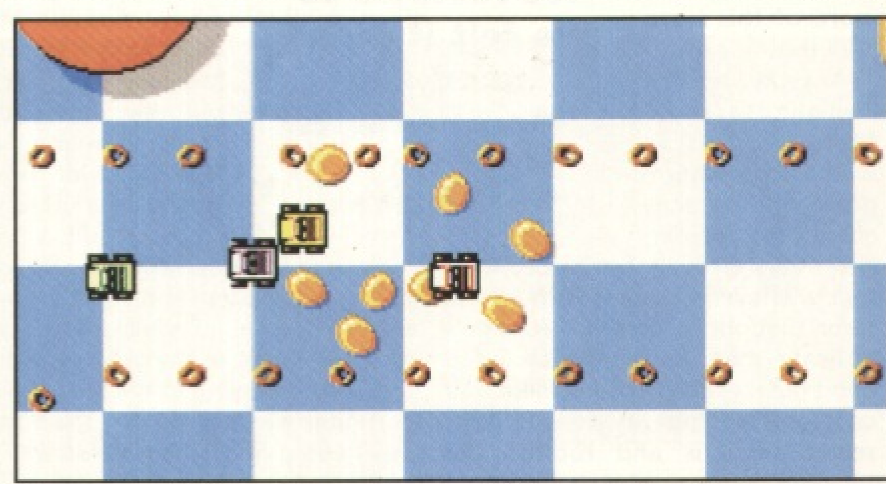
One of the hardest parts has been cramming the game into 512K, as Charlie explains: "There are nine levels and most of them, apart from the odd couple, have got three tracks each. In all, there's about thirty tracks. It's all a bit strange, because the Sega version's tracks are made up of blocks of twelve-by-twelve characters but when I put them through a converter to make the scroll quicker I found that each track takes up 144K, which means that we're having trouble squeezing the game onto half-meg machines. There might bit a bit of disk accessing if you've got a 512K machine as the front-end graphics alone are fairly huge. I'm pretty sure that we'll do it, though."

Apart from tidying up the front end there's not that much left to do so Micro Machines looks set to appear in October. And if there's any justice in the world it'll shoot straight to the top of the charts and quickly establish itself as THE top-down racer of the 90s.





(Above) Over to Charlie for a quick synopsis of Micro Machines: "Basically, you choose who you want to be and who you want to race against. You can select a driver from several different kids, some of whom are a little reckless, others are more cautious. This changes the way the cars handle and what their top speeds are. You can handicap some players as well, so if one of you is better than the other then you can adjust the difficulty that way."



There are two different types of games: challenge and head-to-head. The former can only be played in one-player mode (it pits you against three other computer-controlled vehicles in an out-and-out race over a set number of laps) but the head-to-head (played against the computer or, even better, against a mate) is where the game really comes into its own.



Obviously you can't see the cars moving so you'll have to take my word for the fact that everything whizzes along at fifty frames per second - the absolute limit for Amiga games. The tracks will feature loads of obstacles so be prepared to leap over school folders, avoid speed-reducing glue blobs and weave between spilt beans (baked, that is).

People are always asking why the chicken crossed the road but they never seem to wonder what it was doing there in the first place. Matt Broughton brushes up on his dodgy egg jokes in this WIP eggslusive. (Groan... it's started already - Ed.)

LAY A LITTLE EGG FOR ME



PROJECT: Alfred Chicken
PUBLISHER: Mindscape
DEVELOPER: Twilight: Andy Swann (Code); Wayne Billingham (Gaphics); Dave Whittaker (Sound).
INITIATED: March 1993
RELEASE: September 1993

Isn't it amazing how a film can affect you? All that talk in Jurassic Park about how dinosaurs evolved into birds terrified me. Now whenever someone mentions chickens my mind immediately flashes to scenes of huge velociraptors bouncing around and screaming while maiming innocent children in kitchens. The thought of large claws ripping stomachs open and spilling steaming intestines into cupped hands keeps me awake at night listening for that 'trumpety' noise in the distance. The nice doctor says I'll be okay eventually.

But that's all in the past now, I think. And anyway, there are no dinosaurs to be found in these pages, just good old-fashioned chickens that wander around waiting to be eaten and laying eggs while they're there. And hopping around platforms and jumping on baddies' heads. Yes, Alfred Chicken is (nearly) here.

Alfred Chicken has actually been alive and kicking for some time now in the form of a very successful Gameboy release that followed the platform antics of the aforementioned domesticated fowl, and now Mindscape are proudly set to release the Amiga version onto the waiting masses.

Alfred Chicken was originally created by Jason McGann and Pete Tattersall of development team Twilight and is more inspired by Warner Bros cartoons and Gary Larson's 'The Far Side' than by the obvious genre competitors such as Mario or Sonic. To tie-in with Alfred's recent bid to become an MP (see News for the full story) PR bod James Morris from Mindscape told us "The idea was hatched to create a new political force in chicken circles." Hmm, yes. If you get the feeling that the general mood surrounding Alfred is a silly one then you'd be right - and the storyline isn't much more sensible to be quite honest!

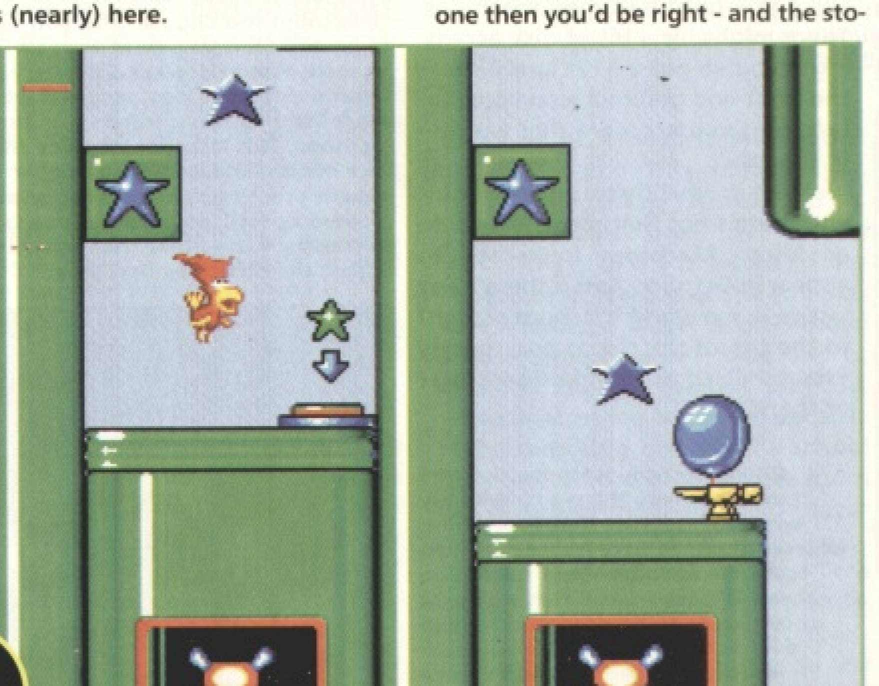
"The evil Meka-Chickens have eggnapped Billy Egg and his brothers for evil cloning experiments. Alfred must rescue the Eggs and smash the Meka-Chickens' plan for world domination," it says here. Oh God, I don't know how much more of this I can take this.

Anyway, tell me Twilight, was it difficult to come up with a new platform game with so many already on the market? "Very difficult, but not so hard that we haven't done it with Alfred. Jason thought of Alfred because he's basically mad, and we've included good main character movement and constant challenge, as well as lots of secret sections and rooms. The emphasis here is on Alfred's unique style and humour in an all-British character."

> **"The Gameboy version rated very high in all it's reviews so we felt it didn't need any improvements"**
>
> The Twilight Team

Alfred has certainly got a unique style of his own as he leaps and bounces across screen after screen of strange and frankly silly action in an attempt to rescue his mates while avoiding the many forms of death that await him. Leap up and pull down to send Alfred dive bombing (beak at the ready) anything unfortunate enough to be underneath him. Miss your target though and you'll probably find yourself well and truly stuck beak-first in the ground with your legs waggling in the air.

Though dive bombing is the best way to be sure of killing the strange



To progress on some levels you will need to activate switches to operate certain lifts or make platforms solid. They're very user friendly and have little signs on them indicating their effect - this switch makes the 'star platforms' solid enough to land on. To the right you can also see one of the balloons that must be released to progress onto the next level.



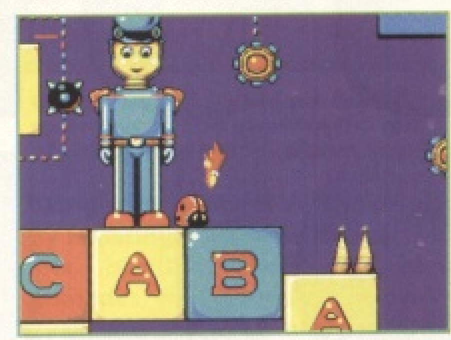
As already mentioned, Alfred's main attack is to dive on his foes from above. If he dives for any length of time without being interupted, jets appear at his side and he goes into... Turbo-Dive! This is very handy for getting through blocked areas that would otherwise need to be pecked through a block at a time. As you would imagine, it also does a fair bit of damage to anything unfortunate enough to be underneath him.

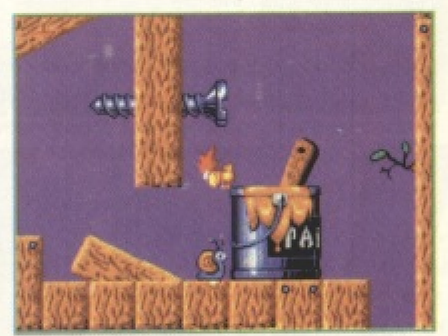
nasties that appear in the game, there are pick-ups that will enable Alfred to shoot baddies for a period of time as well as acquire feathers that rotate around him, killing anything that gets in the way.

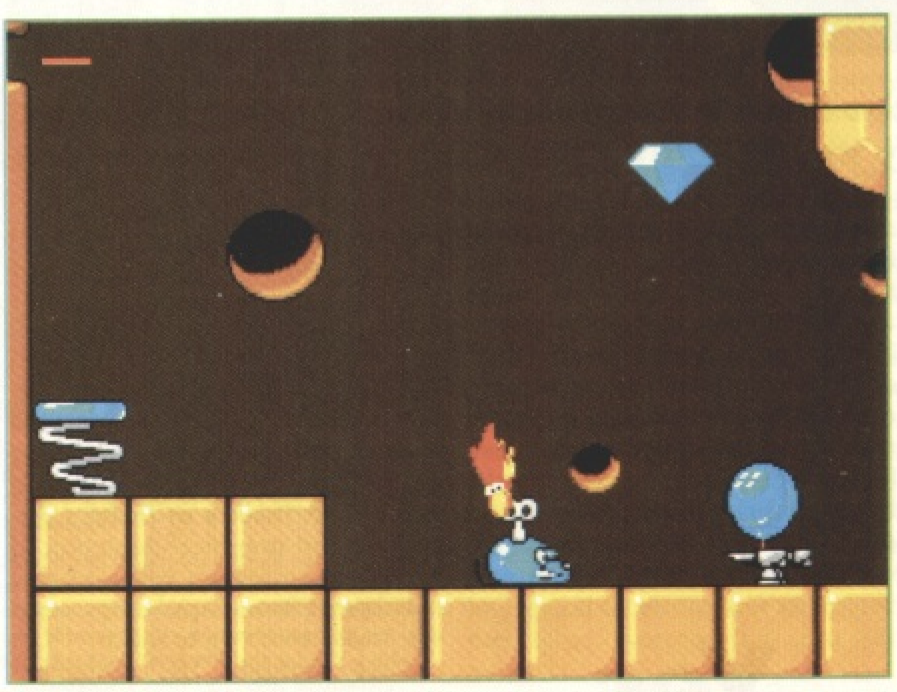
Alfred also has a secret weapon at his disposal - the turbo-dive. Well it's not a secret actually because all you have to do is keep a dive going uninterrupted until - whoosh! - out come the jetwings and you're off at a frightening pace. This is particularly useful for getting through some of the areas that have blocks in them. These blocks can be destroyed by pecking them one at a time, but it takes a fair amount of time to do it this way.

In a desperate attempt to drag the conversation into the realms of 'normal' I ask how the game has been tweaked or refined in the transition from the Gameboy to the Amiga. "The Gameboy version rated very highly in all its reviews so we felt it didn't really need any improvements other than graphic size and sound - not to mention introducing colour (something that made the programmer very sad!) There are eleven levels in all, plus three bosses (the evil Meka-Chickens) as well as many bonus games and rooms. The levels are split into five specific zones; Cheese, Baby, Wood, Book and Glass, as well as the Meka-Chickens' HQ and various bonus zones. Oh, and some secret zones."

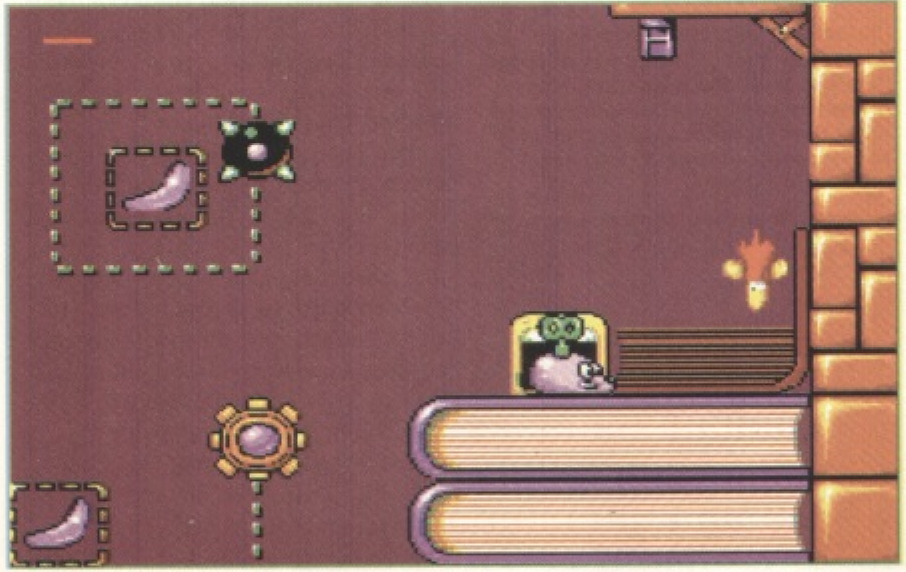
The zones feature baddies that are related to the theme as well as a number of standard baddies that occur all the way through the game: cheese world features mice while snails crawl around the wood world.







As you might expect from a world made of cheese, mice are all over the place and must be dealt with in Alfred's own unique style - dive bombing! Diamonds are there to be collected but are often hidden in difficult-to-get-to places. Luckily there are a fair number of springs around the landscape that can be used to reach higher levels, and don't forget that there are secret passageways out there somewhere.



Other in-game baddies seem to have no real orientation at all - but they do look nice! Apart from baddies wandering around trying to inflict pain on Alfred, the zones are strewn with dangerous areas that must be avoided or traversed using the lifts and conveyor belts - glass world has jagged broken bottles, wood world has lines of four-inch nails, etc.

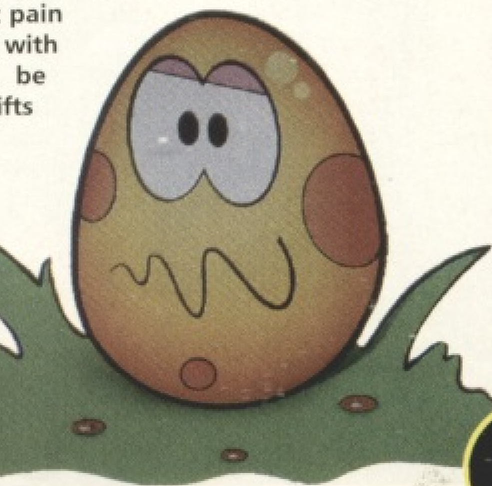
Back to Twilight. Can you give us some of the game's technical specifications on the Amiga, i.e. speed of the scroll, number of colours, etc - our readers like that sort of thing you see, although it boggles my mind to be honest. "Alfred has very fast scroll...." no, please don't confuse me with technical terms, "...well fifty frames per second actually, and lots of sprites." Lots of sprites? "Yes, oh and 32-colour graphics."

Well that's quite enough technical data (ahem). Is there anything that you would've liked to incorporate into the game but couldn't because of time or hardware limitations? "Well everything from the Gameboy original - characters and gameplay - has been converted so no, not really. We think that the most important and essential ingredients in a good platform game are excellent playability and a good challenge. And having Alfred Chicken in them, of course!

"Jason and Pete are now working on the design for the Super NES Alfred 2 and it looks like it's going to be very special, so we may well convert this onto the Amiga 1200/CD32 for late 1994. There's also an A1200 version of Alfred 1 planned."

How will Alfred 2 follow on from Alfred Chicken? "The design has Alfred and his mates (and the evil Meka-Chickens) falling into a strange 'fairly tale' land and acting out stories like Jack and The Beanstalk with Alfred as Jack and the Meka-Chickens as the Giant. Alfred will also be joined by his little nephew 'Dinky' for two-player action."

Well there you have it - a new breed of hero for a new breed of game player. Or something. It's all just a bit too silly for me but you may feel differently. Let's just wait and see.



PROJECT: Theatre of Death

PUBLISHER: Psygnosis

DEVELOPER: In-house: Dave Anthony (Main man, apparently); Jed Adams (Intro and 'bits'); Gary Burley, James Robinson, Jerry Oldrieve, Rita Kinsella (Graphics); Mike Clarke, Mike Tonks (Sound).

INITIATED: October 1992

RELEASE: October 1993

ENJOY THE VIOLENCE

Yes kids, it's time for the issue's Competely Over-The-Top Violent Game Award, which this month is gratefully accepted by Psygnosis. Simon Byron tries to not to faint.

When a game designer describes the basic plot behind his latest game as "slaughter everything" you know you're in trouble. So here I am, charged with the task of making Psygnosis's latest bloodfest sound acceptable to grown-ups who are concerned at the ever-increasing amount of violence their kids are exposed to.

I'm sure it's not really like that, daddy-ohs. There are deep social issues raised in the game which question our perception of time, space and the universe and our role within it. In fact, playing a few missions of Theatre of Death is a proper education, with environmental messages and multiplication tables subliminally flashed on-screen, engraving the things that really matter in life into every child's brain. Or perhaps not.

Nope, I can't do it. And I'm sure that even if I bothered you wouldn't take any notice, for everyone knows that killing people is what the game-buying public are really into. Syndicate was praised for having torched corpses littering its futuristic streets, the forthcoming Mortal Kombat will impress folk with its harrowing decapitation and spine-removing scenes and Theatre of Death's disturbing and graphical depiction of exploding snowmen will probably make great front page stories when the Royals aren't up to much.

Dave Anthony, the aforementioned designer of Theatre of Death, is consistently brief and to the point whenever you ask him about his labour of love. Apparently Theatre of Death is "an action game combining strategy with a fast pace" but that hardly accurately describes what the game's about, so I'll have to chip in.

"You control either a lone soldier or a whole platoon of gun-toting maniacs," adds Simon Byron, Britain's most miserable journalist and person who consistently bails out the rest of his so-called colleagues by maintaining a level of quality so high that it rubs off on them, "the idea being to wipe out all of the enemy from a variety of terrains before they do the same to you." Er, thanks.

At first glance, Theatre of Death looks very similar to Syndicate but Dave actually describes the game's biggest influences as Lemmings and Populous. "I sat down with Ian 'Gripper' Grieve (the producer) back in October and had a look at successful games, trying to get general ideas on what makes a really good game. Then we added a few ideas of our own, and that basically shaped Theatre of Death."

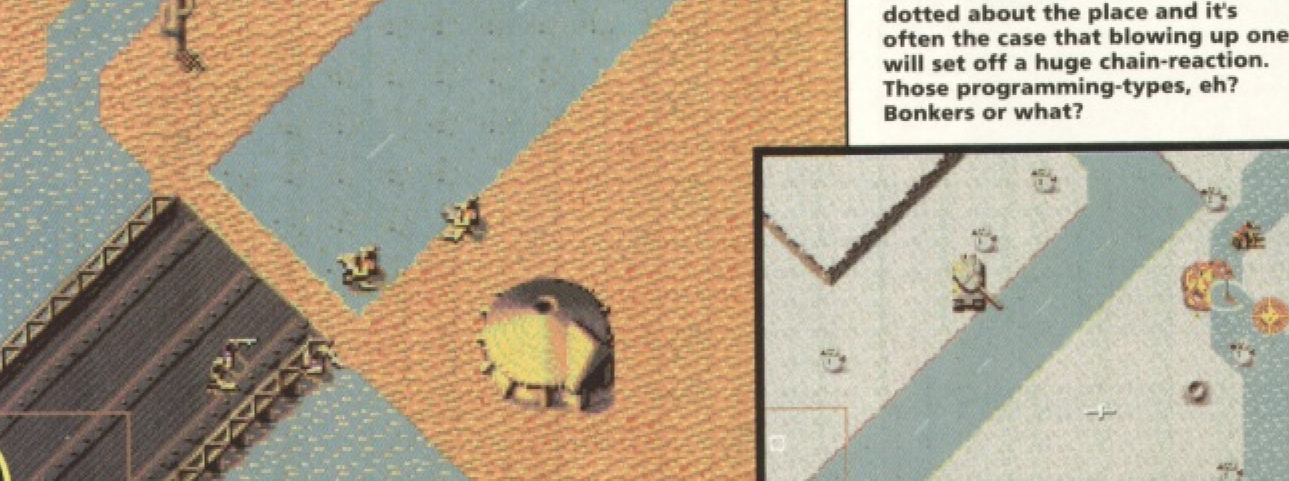
The game's name hardly leaves much to the imagination and initially the big-wigs at Psygnosis weren't too happy with it. "Sales and marketing said 'Great game but we can't go with the name, you know, death and all that'. However, they soon agreed that killing can be fun in Theatre Of Death. Some MPs might disagree, though."

Yes, it has to be said that although Theatre of Death contains violence by the bucketful it at least has its tongue firmly in its cheek.

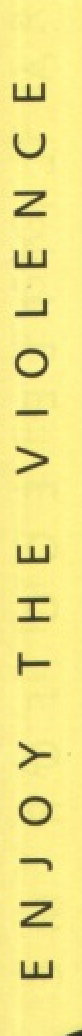
Like many games nowadays, Theatre of Death leaves its rotting corpses scattered about the place so by the end of the game the battlefield looks like, erm, a battlefield. I remember when enemies used to flash then vanish. Much like Dave in Finsbury Park after work. I've told him, you know.

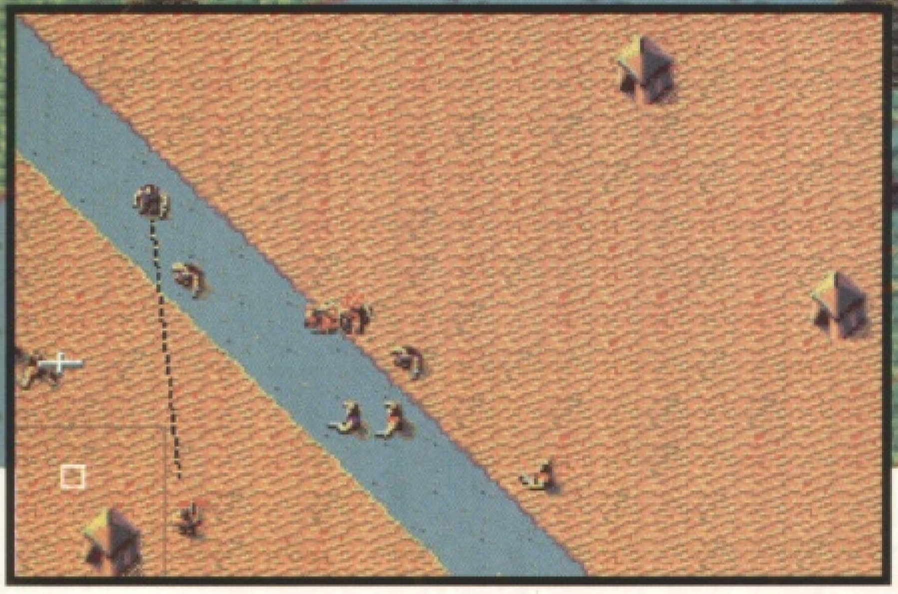
"Yes."

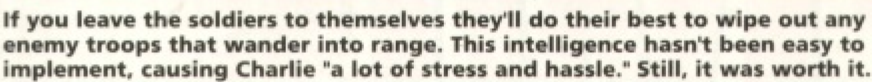
Dave Anthony, Theatre of Death's 'main man'.



(Below) Ah yes, the exploding snowmen. You'll find loads of these dotted about the place and it's often the case that blowing up one will set off a huge chain-reaction. Those programming-types, eh? Bonkers or what?

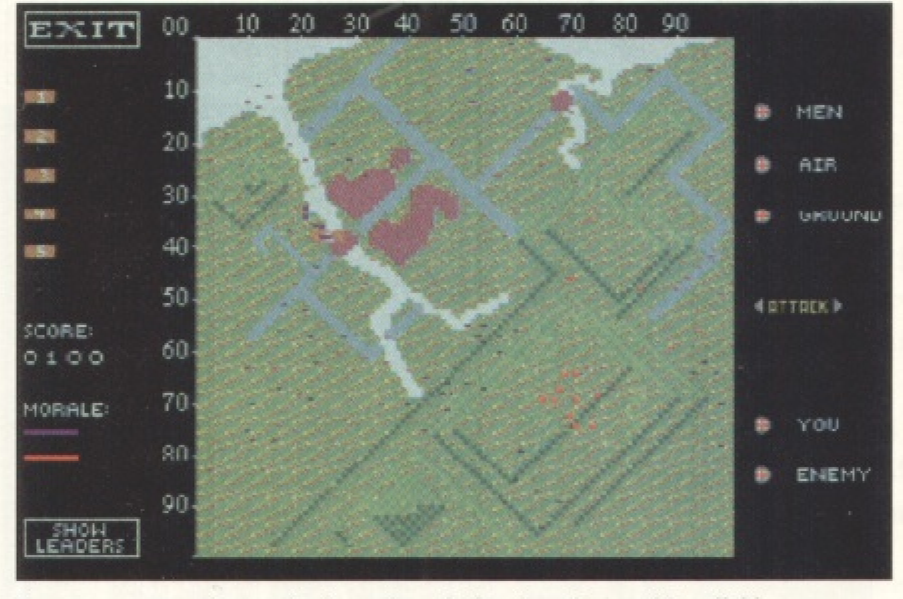




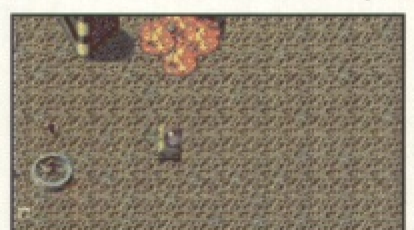


If you leave the soldiers to themselves they'll do their best to wipe out any enemy troops that wander into range. This intelligence hasn't been easy to implement, causing Charlie "a lot of stress and hassle." Still, it was worth it.

One of the game's unique features is the ability to call in help. By inputting co-ordinates and pressing the red button you'll can send forth a huge wave of destructive fighter planes, leaving the enemy with no chance.



The map screen shows the how the mission is going and by clicking on a certain area you'll be whisked to that particular spot. There are some refinements yet to be made to this part of the game so don't be surprised if the finished version looks completely different.



Sometimes designers have no idea of the effort that goes into captioning pictures. Take this visual to the left here. What else is there to say apart from the fact that there's a tank and an explosion? And you can probably work that bit out for yourselves. I don't know, you just can't get the staff these days.



Along with plenty of death achieved by shooting soldiers with 'real' bullets, blasting them with hand grenades, rockets, flame throwers, dynamite and land mines, running them over in tanks, feeding them to the sharks and watching reinforcements carpet bomb the enemy (phew!), there are little touches like an abandoned double-decker bus in the moon level (inspired by the Sunday Sport's not-made-up story) and an escape on the back of a motorbike, like in the Great Escape, which are sure to raise a smile and remind you that this is all make-believe.

"We have drawn on ideas from a number of sources to come up with a truly original game," smiles Dave. "We've been inspired by many films and TV series like Jaws and Star Trek. There's even a monolith on the moon along with some Space 1999 Eagle transporters. Basically anything that impressed us during our childhood has been incorporated into the game."

The game has been constantly been developing as the team come up with off-the-wall scenarios and gameplay improvements. When we were originally shown Theatre of Death it had a diamond-shaped display but that was soon changed when Dave and the chaps realised that a more regular square window (it's like Playschool, isn't it?) enhanced the player's field of vision, thus making it easier to plan your tactics more efficiently. "Virtually everything has evolved throughout development," admits Dave, "We've added more features, more missions, new sound and graphics, as well as revised the original control system.

"We have tried to make the game accessible by employing an easy-to-use control system so you can command anything from one man on a commando-style romp or whole platoons with the minimum of fuss. The scrolling improves every day in terms of smoothness and speed."

The amount of missions is another undecided variable. "At the moment we've completed 30 missions. We plan to put in a further 30 to 50, depending on ideas and time." These missions and mini-plots don't come cheap, however, and the size of the game is increasing rapidly. "Memory? I can't remember how much the game takes up off-hand, but I do know that there is a lot of it. The finished game will probably come on two or three disks."

Complex artificial intelligence routines are required for both sets of troops as they'll decide to shoot things themselves if you leave them hanging around for too long. "Each troop is highly intelligent - well, they walk around trees, anyway. No but seriously, we implemented an accurate recursive A-to-B routing algorithm. It was lots of stress and hassle to get this intelligence working properly, but I think we've got it sorted now."

Time for a bit of bad news for A1200 owners. Sit down, make yourself a cuppa and prepare for the worst. "Unfortunately there will be no special A1200 version," confesses Dave, "but when you see the finished version and notice what we've made an A600 do then you'll realise that there really is no need for an enhanced version."

As the sun begins to set on Theatre of Death's horizon and the game nears completion there are still a couple of questions that need answering before we fetch our hat and coat and embark on the long trek back to The One Towers. Quickly Dave, tell us and tell us true, what's been the hardest part so far? "Trying to stop playing the game when I should be programming it."

And one last thing before you go. Are you happy with the way the game is turning out?

"Yes."

PROJECT: Seek & Distroy
PUBLISHER: TBA
DEVELOPER: Vision Software:
Paul Andrews (Programming),
Rod Smith (Graphics)
INITIATED: Spring 1993
RELEASE: Autumn 1993



RIDE OF THE VAL-KIWIS

You coan't get much further from the cutesy escapades of Woody's World than Seek & Destroy, an ultra-violent shoot-'em-up, yet both come from the fertile minds of the chaps at Vision Software. David Upchurch calls collect to New Zealand to find out all about it...

It takes a lot to impress us cynical lot at The One. When Simon saw the dinosaurs in Jurassic Park his verdict on them was that they were "alright". Matt once saw Arnold Schwarzenegger in a restaurant who, according to the lad, "is not as muscley as people make out." I, on the other hand, once got abducted by aliens who gave me a sightseeing tour of the wonders of the universe. I'd seen better.

Then one day a disk plopped through The One Towers' letterbox bearing a rolling demo of a new game from Kiwi coders Vision Software, the geezers who wrote Woody's World. Out of a sense of duty we loaded it up and such was its amazingness that Simon's head exploded, Matt curled up into a foetal ball and regressed to childhood while I lost my appetite for two days. That game was Seek & Destroy.

The Seek & Destroy project is the baby of just two people, Paul Andrews the programmer and Rod Smith the graphic artist. ("We'll be using an independent musician for the music," adds Paul, "but we haven't decided who that'll be as yet.") As the game's name implies, it's an all-action blaster. "We're putting together a lot of missions, each of which will entail, well, mass destruction and carnage!" says Paul. "There are four different locations including jungle, desert, sea and snow, each with a large variety of ground and air defences. It is your mission to go in and destroy everything. There might be a little variation on this theme but most of that will be coming from the enemy and, of course, your way of dealing to them."

"We've been planning a shoot-'em-up since before we started Woody's World," says Rod. "The response we've got from our shareware releases proved that, despite what the industry says, good blasters are far from a dying art."

"Going from a humungous platform game to an all-out shoot-'em-up was really refreshing. There's nothing like a change to keep the creative juices flowing," chips in Paul.

"Yeah, there's nothing more creative than developing a game of mass destruction like Seek & Destroy!" concludes Rod, obviously a person of sound mind. Chopper-based blasters seem to be in vogue at the moment. Over the last few months the Codies had a shot (pun intended) at the genre with Firehawk and, of course, Electronic Arts blew us away (another pun intended) with the brilliant Desert Strike. How do Paul and Rod think Seek & Destroy scores over those earlier games?

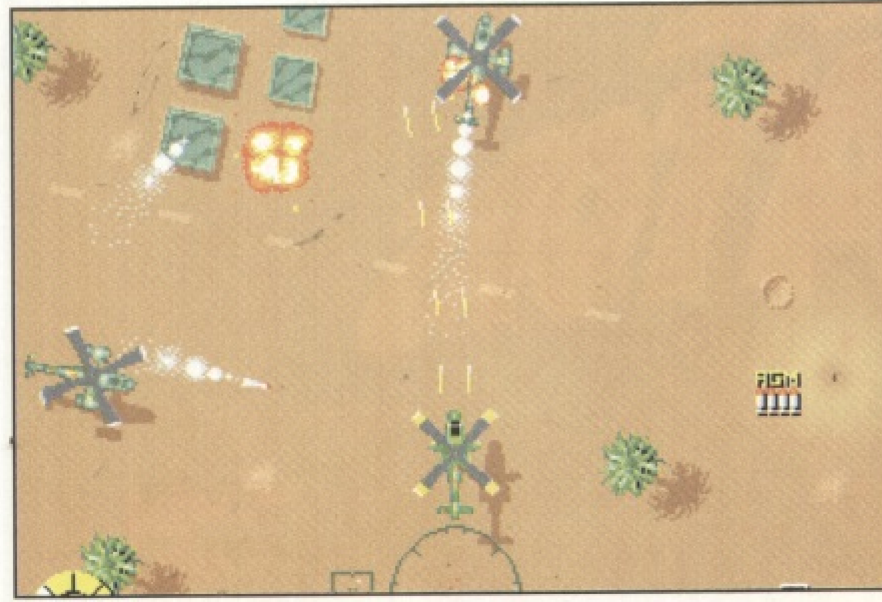
"Being a helicopter game, people are bound to compare Seek & Destroy directly with Desert Strike," admits Rod. "However we've developed it along completely different lines. Instead of being realistic in firepower we've gone tenfold on the ammo supply."

"Also, the optional mouse control means proportional control," adds Paul. "This along with selectable sensitivity makes the control method in Seek & Destroy unlike any other shoot-'em-up. And the rotating screen is pretty unique..."

Ah yes, the rotation. This really is something special. You see, rather than the 'copter rotating and moving over an eight-way scrolling background, in Seek & Destroy it's the

(Above and right) A selection of some of the background scenery. As you can see each object has had to be painstakingly rotated 32 times ready for plotting on-screen. Rod used DPaint's rotate facility to do this but even so the results often needed touching up. That's an awful lot of work!





(Left) No, your chopper hasn't shrunk - it's just landed to pick up troops.

(Left) "That's a kill!" shouts your co-pilot. One down, another to go.

background that rotates while the 'copter remains facing up-screen. The inspiration for this approach came from a PD game that The One featured on its coverdisk a few months back - Transplant. "The objects rotating around the ship was not only different but I thought it was really playable," says Rod.

For Seek & Destroy, however, Paul wanted to produce something a bit more visually exciting than Transplant's simplistic starry backdrops. The end result is a whole screen of huts, missile launchers, palm trees and soldiers, all rotating super-smoothly around the player's ship. "After some brainstorming we came up with a method of rotating the whole screen around the player. We've been really pleased with how much we can do on the good old Amiga," says Paul.

"Yeah, when people see it up and running they'll watch it for a while then they go 'Wow!'. We've developed special routines for the shadows which adds the extra depth to the game. When the screen rotates, the light source rotates with it, which means the shadows need to rotate around the object, which is rotating around you.... Ummm, you need to see it to understand."

"That's why when it came to the first press release we got a bit stumped," adds Paul. "It was too hard to explain the game and the way it worked. We ended up having to send out a disk with a running demo on it." The very disk, indeed, that got us at The One so excited. (We're still trying to calm down, you know.)

The effect was achieved by drawing all the background objects at their various rotations and then plotting them as required - not an easy task for the Amiga. "When developing games on the Amiga you're always keeping in mind both memory restraints and speed," says Paul. "Seek & Destroy has been a tough call on both counts. We wanted 32 rotations for each shape, a separate shadow and we wanted to fill the screen with objects so that every part of the screen effectively rotates around the player.

> **"Going from a humungous platform game to an all-out shoot-'em-up was really refreshing. There's nothing like a change to keep the creative juices flowing."**
>
> **Paul Andrews, Seek & Destroy's programmer.**

"That being the case we had to come up with some pretty good techniques to get everything happening. Re-using sprites on nearly every second line meant that filling the screen with fire power was not a problem. Being able to blit shapes upside down meant we could cut the number of shapes in memory by half. I suppose it all comes down to where there's a will there's a way."

"Most of the work in Seek & Destroy is hand-drawn in DPaint," points out Rod. "Although DPaint can rotate brushes, it never does it very successfully so the frames still have to be touched up. We went to 64 rotations for some shapes to get them really smooth. As you can imagine, that's a lot of work."

Now the game's running as fast as Paul and Rod want it to on a standard Amiga, so an A1200-specific version looks unlikely at the moment, although the game will be slightly enhanced. "The game has been developed so as to run as smoothly as possible on a standard 1Mb A500," explains Paul. "The A1200 version will have that extra slick finish but standard Amiga users will get the same action and destruction combination."

Like any good shoot-'em-up, Seek & Destroy puts a lot of lovely weapons at you disposal. "The chain gun [your basic weapon] is limitless and can be used for both air and ground attack," says Rod. "Then there's the air-to-ground and air-to-air guided missiles; a small tracking cursor locks on to targets so you know when and who you're firing them at."

"We've also got tracer rockets that give you some pretty rapid destruction and the Exocet missiles which just fly straight and then BANG! Mass destruction! Then there's the good ol' napalm to really set the game on fire!" exclaims Paul.

Paul and Rod have put a lot of work in to ensure that the weapons look as good on-screen as they sound on paper: "There's been a lot of attention gone into detail in this department," concurs Rod. "The shrapnel effects work well. When something is hit hot shards of metal fly off which is quite satisfying. Then smoke starts billowing out from the enemies after they take damage - this all drifts off in the wind which is another touch which gives the game that extra realism."

"After this the copilot will probably urge you to 'FINISH 'EM OFF!' - if you take his advice the enemy blows up in a nice healthy explosion," points out Paul.

Talking of the speech, I should point out that it's superb. All the way through the game your actions are accompanied by atmospheric radio chatter from your co-pilot and ground control. "That was an enjoyable part of development," says Paul. "We had the digital effects unit plugged into the sampler, got out the microphone and went for it. We'd done some experimenting in both Cybernetix and Microbes but we're really happy with the results we have achieved in Seek & Destroy."

"Both the speech and the sound effects really help set the right atmosphere," agrees Rod "The speech in Seek & Destroy is all event-driven and there's heaps of it. The trick is to fit it in without it becoming annoying. We're really happy with the results we're getting."

Seek & Destroy is shaping up very nicely, it has to be said. If we can stand the excitement you can expect to see a full review in a couple of months or so, all being well.. Stay frosty.



(Above and left) Certain levels see you piloting your chopper over icy wastes. Here note the brilliant smoke trails left by the missiles.

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PROJECT: Oscar
PUBLISHER: Flair Software
DEVELOPER: The Flair Team
INITIATED: November 1992
RELEASE: September 1993

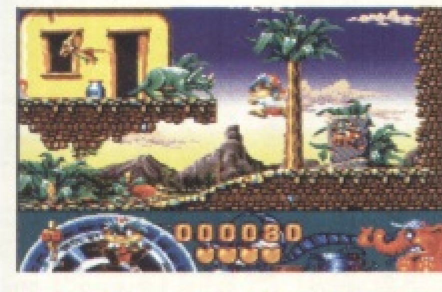
AND THE WINNER IS...

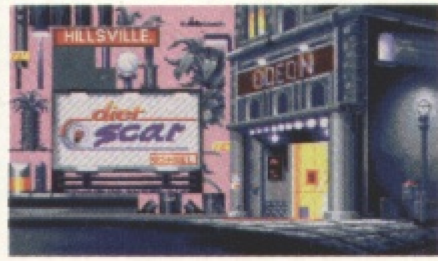


You're probably under the impression that there's only one big name platformer on the way - a game beginning with a Z and ending in an L and a 2 - but there's soon to be be a new contender in town. Matt Broughton forgets about Ninjas and checks out the newcomer from Flair.

Remember Trolls? Who couldn't? With their fly-away hair problems, large noses and sticky-out ears they not only reigned supreme in most of the card shops in England but also had a fair presence when they appeared on the Amiga at the beginning of the year.

Sales for the Trolls computer game were a lot more impressive in other parts of the world than they were in the UK, but they were still good enough to convince Flair to set about making Trolls 2. Naturally, The Flair Team (no individual names please, it's a group effort) were curious to know why sales for the game had been so average when various reviews had actually marked it above Zool.





"When we looked back to see why it didn't do so well we established that it was nothing to do with the quality of the game but because the game was perceived to be a 'girls' game," explains Mr Flair. "We took a number of stands at various shows and quizzed teenagers about the game and the main reason for people deciding not to buy the game was because Trolls were a 'girly type' toy in the shops. It was as bad as calling the game 'Barbie Doll."

By this time work had progressed on the game but it was obvious that a new character identity was needed. The Flair team went back and made the main character more butch, aiming for something more in line with Sonic, Zool, Mario "...and anyone else you'd care to think of", as well as constructing a more butch scenario than Trolls' cute and sickly one. Thus a star was born - Oscar.

Like all teenagers, Oscar loves to go to the movies and that's where his fun starts. On arrival at the local multiplex, the movies showing become the 'worlds' which the heroic Oscar explores in his quest to become the latest star of the big screen: Cartoon Superworld, Wild West Capers, Games Show Bonanza, World War 3, Jurassic Pranks, The Horror Channel and Sci-Fi Encounter. Each world is split into three levels plus further bonus levels at the end of each world completed. As Oscar ventures between levels he must collect miniature versions of the 'real' Oscars in order to progress.

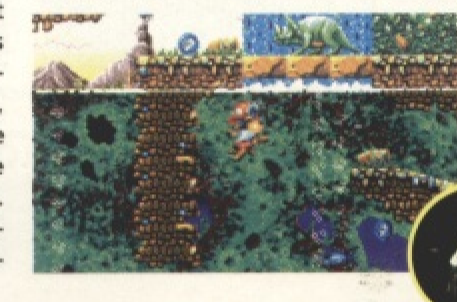
> "We believe Oscar's the ultimate. When you see it you'll be astounded."
> **The Flair Team.**

But considering the recent proliferation of platform games, what does Oscar have to offer the genre? "When you see it yourself you won't have to ask that question," boasts Mr Flair. "The graphics are stunning and the gameplay is the slickest, smoothest and most glitch-free you'll see on a computer."

A fairly brave statement when you consider some of the other releases about to hit the market, but it can't have been easy to get to this 'level of excellence'. "The most difficult thing has been quite literally, even on the A1200, to cram in all the things we wanted to get into the game from a memory point of view. The panel is in 32 colours, the background is in 32 colours, the foreground is in 32 colours, the sprite is in 16 colours - it's all been a horrendous job and it's taken a lot of memory to make the screens as active and as pretty as they are without sacrificing sprites."

There will be a simultaneous launch for all formats, so what will the new CD32 version hold for the lucky owners? "General improvements will affect sound and graphics with digitised sequences for the front end. The general gameplay will be unchanged as we feel that it's as good as it can be."

Looks to me like there could be a new star waiting in the wings of that great theatre we call the Amiga. Only time will tell....



PROJECT: Manchester United Premier League Champions
PUBLISHER: Krisalis
DEVELOPER: In-house
Pete Harrap (Game programming); Simeon Pashley (Front-end programming); Phil Hackney, Neil Adamson (Graphics); Matt Furniss (Sound)
INITIATED: January 1993
RELEASE: October 1993

HERE WE GO HERE WE GO HERE WE GO ... AGAIN

Just when you thought it was safe to play one soccer game only, Krisalis announce the third in their successful Manchester United series. But can you spot the subtle difference this time around? Simon Byron can...

Surprisingly, there's hardly any main program code but graphics-wise there's almost half-a-meg's worth. Each team can have different shirts, different hair colours and different skin colours. All the players will have hair and skin colours as in real life and you can even make some of the players bald, which is always handy.

It's very fortunate for Krisalis that Manchester United won last year's Premier League. For without this fortuitous victory they wouldn't have a particularly valid reason to release Manchester United Premier League Champions. They could have called it Manchester United Nearly Premier League Champions or, more realistically, Manchester United Not As Good As QPR, but - hey! - they did win and here we are once again.

But this time there's a difference. Rather than churning out another side-on footy romp, the Rotherham boys have decided to change the perspective and adopt the by-now-familiar top-down view. So why this sudden change? Pete Harrap, programmer of MUPC, knows and he's about to share it with you.

"Mainly to get some nice speed out of it," he confesses to your fearless reporter. "The other two Man. United games suffered a little bit from a lack of speed. John Barnes was basically as fast as we could get it but obviously it wasn't up to arcade speed. Small graphics should allow for better gameplay - that's the hope."

Seeing as how Man. Utd Premier Champs is a top-down footy game, it seems only proper to raise the inevitable How's It Going To Improve Over Sensi? question. Pete is very prompt with his reply (he couldn't have anticipated such a question, could he?): "Tactically, basically. You'll have all the moves that Sensi has plus a few more and the players will play a lot more intelligently. You can decide exactly how you want them to behave; defenders can hang back or move forward and behave like strikers in certain situations.

"There're no set formations so you can position your players wherever you like. You can only change those kinds of things at half time or whenever you bring on a substitute because obviously the manager hasn't got that kind of control over the players when they're actually running around the pitch.

"All these options are accessed from something we call the Tacti-grid. What you have is a grid representing the pitch and after clicking on any of your players you can move them wherever you like.

"The whole idea is to make this part of the game very simple and easy to grasp. You don't actually have to move your men around if you don't want to but if you decide that's what you want then it's just a case of picking a man and moving him to wherever you want him to go.

"You've also got individual stats for each player which affects how long they can run for. There are three speeds; walking, running and sprinting. Walking allows them to recover energy while the other two take energy from him at progressively faster rates. If you tell your bloke to constantly push forward then he's going to get tired very quickly. It's a nice, smooth progression - it's certainly not a 'he's either running or he's not' situation."

But will this make the game less appealing to gamers who want to concentrate on just playing an arcade-y football game? "I don't think so because we're making it as user-friendly as possible - you can get into it without being bogged down with endless menus."

Pete is extremely pleased with the way things are progressing. "This game 'feels' a damn sight more playable - there's something about it moving at the speed it is. It runs at fifty frames per second but at the moment there's quite a lot of CPU time left for each frame which gives me more scope to add additional tricks. The only problem is that if all twenty-two players are on-screen at once then the display will slow down slightly."

We've always said that it's virtually impossible to substantially better the standards set by SensiSoccer but there's room for another footy game to happily exist alongside. With any luck Manchester United Premier League Champions will be that game.



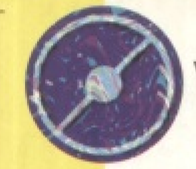
Another idea the team have got is to constantly update the colour of the pitch. This may not sound super-sexy but imagine the effect that 'digging' into the pitch whenever you do a sliding tackle will have. Dirt tracks could appear as the game wears on, producing muddy streaks whenever a particularly violent tackle has taken place. Let's hope they can pull it off.



The team haven't discussed an A1200 version, but CD32 is a distinct possibility. The only problem with this is that gamers using the joyspad may have problems moving diagonally, but that's a handicap many will find themselves having to overcome.



All the important sound effects will be stored in memory with additional background cheers and general crowd noises loading is as you play. The only problem with this is Smart Alecs may remove the disk during play, but there'll be a special routine to prevent the game from locking up.



GULP

ICE



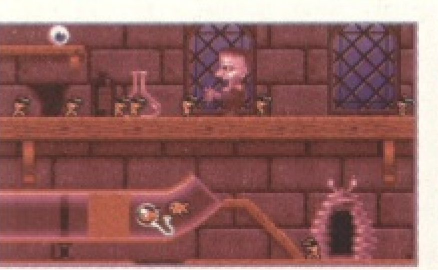
"Many and strange are the universes that drift like bubbles in the foam upon the River of Time. Some - a very few - move against or thwart its currents; and fewer still are those that lie forever beyond its reach, knowing nothing of the future or the past."

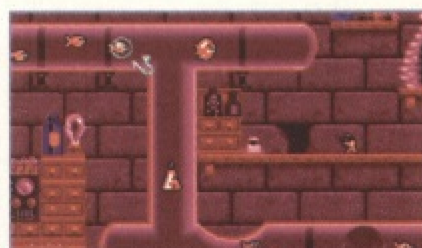
Arthur C. Clarke always did have a special way of telling you something without you really knowing what he was on about, but after reading the slightly surreal Sci-Fi plot for this latest project from ICE it seemed fairly apt to use a quote that referred to both universes and currents.

Disaster has beset the Earth and our civilisation is thrown into turmoil as sea levels rise over the planet. In a galaxy far, far away, our distress call is heard. An advanced race of beings mount a rescue mission, using their advanced technology to prepare themselves for the journey and the task that lies ahead of them. They travel the void of space and time to reach the Earth in its dying days. There's only one problem - this race are fish-like and they're very small.

All sounded quite moody until I mentioned fish, didn't it? The fish basically made a mistake and now face the problem of getting back to their mother ship and changing themselves to a more useful size. Your job is to guide the team of twenty fish through the strange surroundings of planet Earth to reach the rendezvous point. To do this the fish will need to overcome various problems with only their morphing abilities to help them - the fish being able to take on the form and attributes of handy objects such as drills, hammers, etc. The fish can also be exploded, thrown, flattened and generally abused however you fancy.

The game is played over approximately 50 levels falling within six themes; undersea caves, a mad scientist's laboratory, a toy and sports shop, a futuristic city, a mutant kitchen and an underground alien cavern. The program has over five Mb of graphics and over two Mb of sound which is always encouraging to know so keep and ear and a (fish) eye open for this one when it appears in the very near future.















SURF NINJA KIDS

Flair Software



Okay kids, think of the most unlikely partnership of skills and put them together and - shazam! - you have surfing Ninjas, who are making their way to your cinema and computer screens as we talk.

This is the licensed game of the film of the same name from New Line Cinema (the people that brought you the Ninja Turtle movies) and centres around the activities of two brothers who have been brought from their home island in the South China seas to live in California. One of the brothers, Johnny McQuinn (very Chinese sounding, don't you think?) is in fact the heir to the Patu-San throne and, though he has become accustomed to the Californian way of life with his fellow dudes, he is destined to return to his homeland as king.

This seems like a good point in the plot to introduce some trouble so here come a band of Tiger Ninjas (amazing what they can teach animals to do these days, isn't it?) who have been sent to stop Johnny's return and basically cause more trouble than a travelling trouble maker from Tibet who's just been on a two week trouble-making training course - and came top.

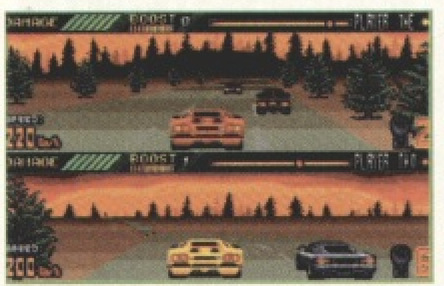
So what does this all boil down to in terms of gameplay? Well, it looks a lot like fighting games did before the likes of Streetfighter 2 changed the 'accepted norm' - i.e. Double Dragon, Kung Fu, Exploding Fist 2 - with the 'distanced side view' and fights galore. There are also 'adventure' aspects of the game with objects to be collected and used as you surf, kick and punch your way from the Californian beaches to the shores of Patu-San.

You'll need to solve the mysteries of the Caves of Kwantzu, explore the village of Mee-Grob and free the captives from the dungeons of Sri-Wan. As if that wasn't enough, you will eventually have to defeat Colonel Chi and his Ninja fighters to claim the crown. It all sounds jolly strange to me, but you can be sure that we'll tell you more as we know it. Wipe out. Yes.

LAMBORGHINI AMERICAN CHALLENGE

Titus Software





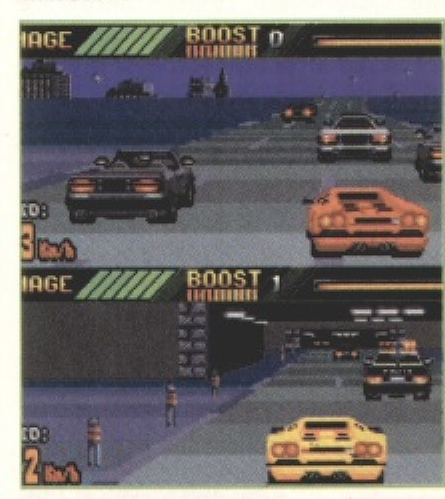
As a child - only a few years ago - I seem to remember being very excited by the chuckle-inducing 'action' film The Cannonball Run. On a fairly regular basis I would sit cross-legged in front of the TV with a friend watching Burt do his stuff with the rest of the star-studded cast. I think that it was the thought of steaming around ordinary streets at extremely stupid speeds that got me excited, but then again it could've been those two cat-suited ladies in the red Lamborghini. Oh, you remember that bit do you? Thought you might.

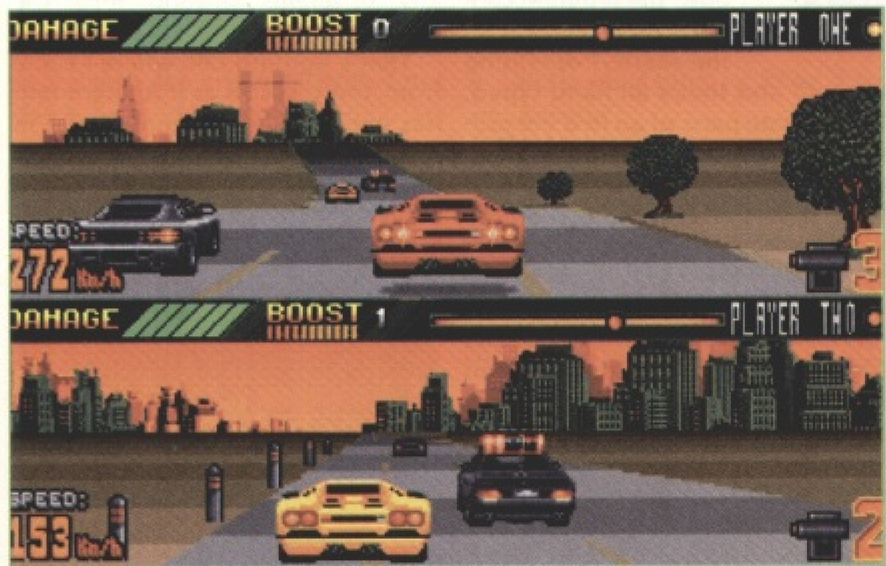
You may be wondering why I'm taking this little pervy trip down memory lane, but it was the first thing I though of when I got a whiff of Titus's latest project - Lamborghini American Challenge.

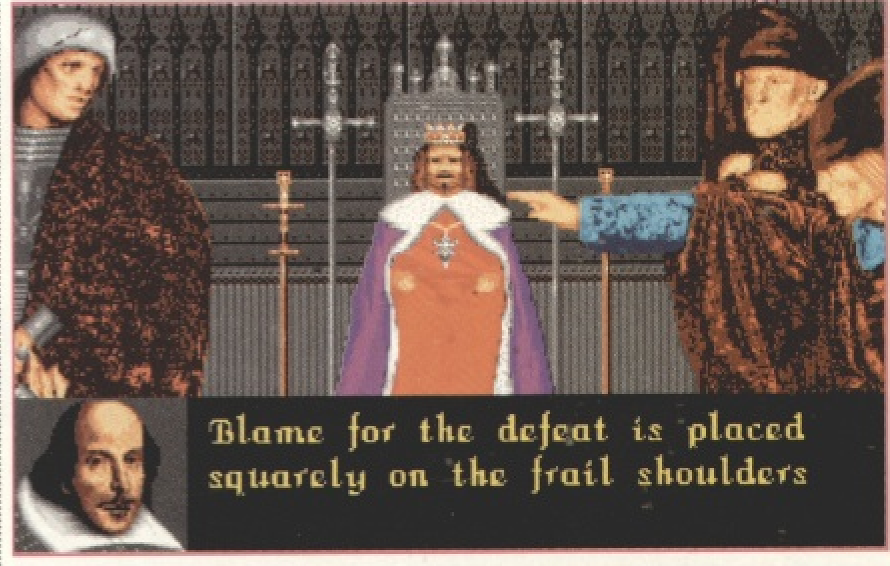
You see this puts you at the wheel of a Lamborghini Diablo as you hurtle through the illegal world of Saturday night racing. Sixty routes crossing American highways will be the unfortunate venue for your organised crime as you burn, churn and er... fern (That's a tree - Ed.) your way from the fourth division of the league to the top of the first.

To achieve this, however, you'll not only need Mansell-like driving skills but Maxwell-like money managing skills as each race has an entrance fee which increases as you progress through the difficulty levels. Money is also going to be pretty important if you are entertaining the thought of upgrading your car with the many toys on offer - and, believe me, if you want any chance of beating the twenty computer-controlled opponents whilst avoiding the police you're going to need to make full use of the turbo-boosts, snow tyres, radar detector, etc., on offer.

Vroom vroom, toot toot, as I like to say as a little end joke. Now, where did I put that old video? Phwoar!







KINGMAKER

US Gold



History, history, history! That's all that games seem to feature these days. Whatever happened to "It's 2156AD and rising from the ashes of the holocaust...." or "As Squidgy the plop monster collect the four pieces of the broken....."? You can't buy a game now without getting 120 pages of history thrown in for good measure it would seem. Within the space of a couple of months I've been to the 14th Century, 1869 and now I'm about to get dragged kicking and screaming into the 15th century to get knocked about in the War of the Roses.

As a strategy boardgame Kingmaker has sold hundreds of thousands of copies since it was released almost 20 years ago. The game offers an abstract recreation of the chaos, war and intrigue that epitomised the period of the 'War of the Roses' with the player's objective being to control the last surviving royal piece, thus becoming the undisputed King of England.

The player controls a faction of nobles representing actual historical personalities from the period with the game reflecting the changes in strength of the factions as they are decimated by battles, plagues and failed ransom attempts or honours are bestowed upon individual nobles and their troops and castles.

The game version boasts a high level of computer-opponent intelligence accompanied by digitised graphics and cinematic action sequences - benefits only the computer can offer. Another important aim of the game is to make it accessible to novice strategy game players by use of the 'chronicle' system which will prompt players at key points in the game with strategy and tactics.

The boardgame has obviously been very popular over the years and US Gold are hoping that this version will attract new players. Only time will tell....



Where we lead with Work In Progresses, others follow. And then we lead again when things go wrong. For the definitive guide to another couple of long lost Amiga games, join Simon Byron as he shouts out...

WHERE

...AMBERMOON?

Way back in February we unveiled Ambermoon to an astounded Amiga audience who began bombarding us with calls and questions regarding the game's release. "Easter," we replied, not knowing the amount of egg would end up on our faces when the game never materialised. It's not our fault, honest - blame Erik Simon, Jurie Horneman and Karsten Koper, three of Ambermoon's design and programming team. They're the ones to ask.

Seeing as though you don't have their phone number, we've decided to do the asking for you. So then, Jurie, just why has Ambermoon taken so long? "After Amberstar was finished, back in February 1992, the entire team sat down together and planned what we'd do in Amberstar 2 (as it was called then)," replies Jurie.

"We made a long list of new features and changes and, after having practically redesigned the original game, we said to our manager 'We'll have it ready by Easter.' And he said: 'Oh, don't hurry - take until August.' Brilliant, we thought - we've got one and a half years, so we happily started working on the most amazing RPG ever.

"Then the word from above came 'Er, we thought you meant August 1992, guys! The game's got to be in the shops by Christmas!' So we sat down again and thought of smallish changes (like a real-time texture-mapping dungeon) we could make to the original Amberstar system so it could be ready by Christmas 1992, and set about working on what was then called Amberstar 1.5.

"When we came to convert Ambermoon from the Atari ST to the Amiga, we found that it had to be virtually rewritten and not just ported across as we'd hoped. The combat screen took longer than expected, the texture-mapped dungeon took longer than expected, changing the editors took longer than expected... but we discovered neat things we could do if we just changed a little bit here and there...

"Suddenly it was March 1993 and the end of Ambermoon still wasn't in sight. We sat down and tried to estimate how long it was going to take, and this time we said 'Okay, August 1993. Really. Honestly.' And we will probably make that. Give or take a month."

"Ambermoon contains more code than the Atari ST operating system - and that's all hand typed."
Jurie Horneman, Ambermoon's programmer.

Erik chips in here with some swear-words: "It seems to me that we didn't fully realise what a bloody huge project we were creating until a few weeks ago when we counted the data. It was weird discovering that we'd managed to create an RPG the size of which you usually see on the PC, programmed by teams five times as large as ours. And on top of that there are all the nagging journos who keep asking us why Ambermoon has taken so long."

Blimey. All this programming has certainly been testing the patience of the Ambermoon team. It must have been a lot harder to program than they anticipated. "Not harder, just longer," offers Jurie. "Mastering the Amiga with its complex operating system and custom hardware took a lot less time and effort than I expected although some of my colleagues, who remember my graceful reaction to the unexplainable bugs caused by incorrect use of the Blitter and what I did to the office doors and walls, may have a different opinion. But what do they know? "Looking back, few routines were really hard. However, at the stage where we are now, the program contains more code than the Atari ST operating system - and that's all hand typed. The separate parts of an RPG are usually easy to program - it's the sticking it together that's the hard part."

So how has the game changed over the months? "Every part of the game has been redesigned as we went along," continues Jurie, "because it's usually only during the actual programming that you can accurately judge what is possible and what isn't."

Has the game turned out pretty much as Jurie originally planned? "No, it's much, much better. We originally planned to do a kind of upgraded version of Amberstar. Now even the game's own mother wouldn't recognise it."

Erik is incredibly confident about Ambermoon's credentials. "Unless some monster of an RPG creeps out of a dark cave full of mutated developers, we should be able to beat all known Amiga RPGs in size, technique (dungeons and fighting screens), graphics (170 different walls, over 350 dungeon objects, 25 or more fully animated monsters), sound (over 30 tunes, complexity and playing time). And due to Jurie's efforts to brush up the user interface, it's no crappy marketing blah-blah when I say that RPG newcomers won't have any problems getting into the game."

That's fighting talk where I come from, but it seems as if Ambermoon has the muscles to reinforce it. I'm off.

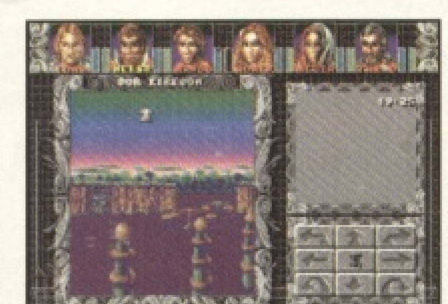
RELEASE DATE: SEPTEMBER 1993 (Oh really?)







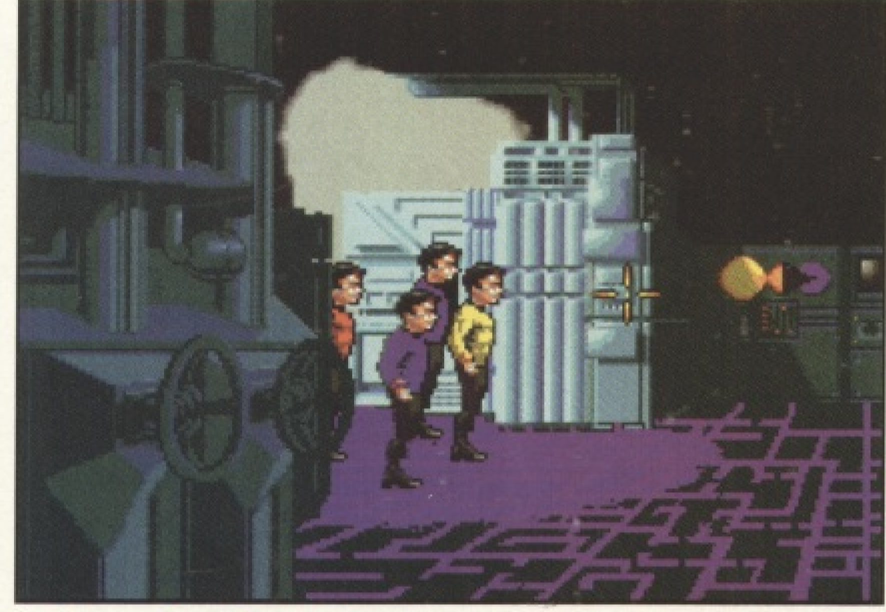






ARE YOU...





...STAR TREK?

Star Trek: The 25th Anniversary will be released at the beginning of the year. Yes, by February or March 1993 you'll be commanding Kirk, Spock, 'Bones' and the rest of them through eight independent mini adventures. It'll be great. What do you mean it's late? Surely not another case for Where Are You...? Oh well, here we go again...

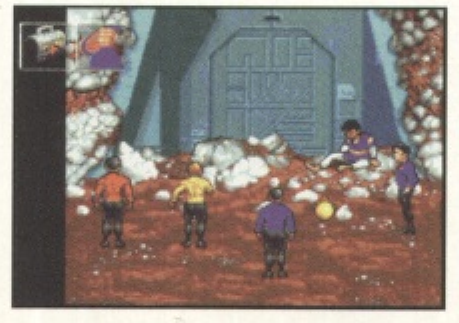
Before we discover exactly what's gone wrong, let's first explain to those who haven't heard of the game what all the fuss is about. You see, Star Trek was released last year on the PC and it received rave reviews, even from people who hated the TV series and the subsequent films. By combining space combat and traditional graphic adventuring it catered for all types, making it one of the most successful PC games in recent years. An Amiga version has been on the cards for some time but nothing has been heard since we originally WIPed the game back in December 1992. So what's up, Spock?

A bloke called Rusty Buchert is handling the conversion over in the States and he has plenty of reasons for the tortuous delay. "The project was originally started in August of last year and I took over in January. Another team began working on the Amiga version but there were a few communication problems and miscalculations on the amount of time the conversion would take. They were told that the crux of the PC original was written in 'C' but when the adventure part of the game was broken down they discovered it was actually coded in 8806 assembly, which blew things out quite a bit.

"One major problem we've had has been getting the game up to speed. We were originally going to write the game primarily for the Amiga 500, but that turned out to be just not practical. We've now decided to aim for the A1200 and A4000."

"I didn't want people to think that this was another shoddy PC to Amiga conversion."
Rusty Buchert, Star Trek: The 25th Anniversary's programmer.

The fortuitous and surprise arrival of the A1200 virtually saved the game, as Rusty explains: "Because of the A1200 we've been able to make the game very close to the PC version; there's very little change between the two. That was always the original idea but when we were well into the Amiga 500 version we decided that it was running too slow. So slow, in fact, that we very nearly canned the whole game. People would have been upset when they compared the A500 version to the PC original.



"In the beginning, the space combat was running at three to four frames a second which just wasn't enjoyable to play. My primary concern was to make the game as fun to play as possible - I didn't want people to think that this was another shoddy PC to Amiga conversion.

"Our development team has been working on the Amiga version since it was first released. They wrote the first debugging tool which wasn't coded by Commodore themselves - that gives you an idea of how well they know the system. So now the 3D system is running very well - typically ten or eleven frames a second, which is impressive when you consider the amount of maths it has to calculate.

"We haven't used sophisticated shading techniques because we're working from digitised models, which look realistic enough without having to over-complicate matters."

Sound is an important atmosphere-generating tool so you need someone talented to make things work as they should. Cue a surprise English guest star, but first Rusty explains how sonics will work: "As in the PC version there will be fully digitised sounds taken directly from the original TV show. The guy who's written all the original music has done a fabulous job. I don't know if you know him, he's called Allister Brimble..."



Know him? We practically went to school with the lad. Actually that's a lie, I've spoken to him twice, on the phone and in person at last year's ECTS, but that almost makes us schoolfriends. Anyway, back to Rusty: "Allister came with very high recommendations. He worked on the Amiga version of Vikings and I was so pleased with what he did that I asked him to provide the music for Star Trek. I'll be suggesting him for a lot more of our projects."

Rusty is enthusiastic about the way the game is shaping up. "It's a good hybrid between a flight simulator and a series of full-blown graphical adventures. The adventure parts are very much like Sierra games but the puzzles are far more logical. Star Trek: The 25th Anniversary will appeal to Trekkies, adventurers and flight sim people alike."

RELEASE DATE: SEPTEMBER 1993
(Yeah, right.)

REVIEWS

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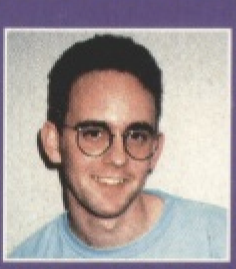
THE SCORES

All elements of our games are rated out of a possible maximum score of a hundred. But what the scores actually mean?

0-25	Rubbish. Offensively low quality.
26-49	Below average. Not acceptable by today's standards.
50-60	Above average. But still plenty of room for improvement.
61-70	Fair to good. Lots of nice points, but in no way perfect.
70-80	Pretty smart. Above accepted standards.
81-90	Extremely good. Top notch impressiveness.
90+	Simply excellent. Breathtaking.

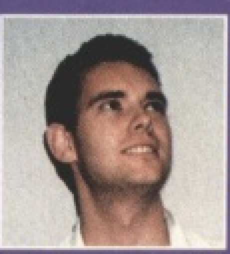
THE OVERALL SCORE

Obviously, at the end of the day when all is said and done, the Overall figure is the best gauge as to whether the game is any good or not. While representative of the elements, it is not an average of the other scores. That's why it isn't called THE AVERAGE.



DAVID UPCHURCH

David is a Hebrew name which means 'Beloved One'. Rubbish - Dave's been doing himself no favours this month. We thought that him telling Simon they couldn't be friends any more after the bespectacled-one humiliated him at Micro Machines was bad enough, but during a pleasant game of CD32 Pinball Fantasies he completely ruined the atmos by resetting the machine just because he was crap. David is 27.



SIMON BYRON

Another Hebrew name, Simon means 'One Who Bears'. Obviously that's a misprint - what it should be is 'One Who Swears'. A lot. At David. The two blokes with 'editor' in their job title haven't exactly been hitting it off of late, with pathetic insults like "You for coffee?" and "Piece of cake?" (at least that's what they sound like) being thrown across the office. Fists nearly flew when Dave wouldn't hand over any Munchies but Matt and Jenny managed to calm things down. For the time being, at least.

MATT BROUGHTON

According to the Bumper Book Of Baby Names, Matthew means 'Gift Of God', although judging by some of the pervy Recommended Compo 8 entries we've received from certain females (namely the 'Who's the best?' question) you would have thought that whoever wrote the book forget to put "To Women" at the end. We're prepared to admit that some girlies may fancy Matt but seeing as though he looks after the competition entries we're a little concerned that a few entries may be fabricated. After all, do Patsy Kensit and Dannii Minogue really read The One? We think not.



JENNY ABROOK

Right chaps, I've got something to tell you so you'd better sit down. When you look up Jennifer in the book of names it refers you to Guinevere, which isn't so attractive is it? Guinny Abrook. Ha! On closer inspection, and travelling via Esmerelda, we learn that her name means 'White Phantom' which, judging by her long, flowing blonde locks and the way she keeps sneaking out to the Baby Food Shop, is quite appropriate. Jenny currently leads in the 'Who's best?' stakes. You boys, eh?

The time: Two years ago. The place: Krisalis HQ. All the company's bigwigs are sitting around a table discussing what their next game should be...

"Right, lads," says Mr Krisalis, the boss. "Let's get down to business. Oh hang on, here's Ms Tightskirt with some tea and biscuits. Help yourself, boys, but don't take the Hob-Nobs as they're my favourites."

Ms Tightskirt, a meek secretary wearing thick glasses, enters pushing a trolley laden with cups of tea and a tray of biscuits. After several minutes of clanking teaspoons and arguing over the last Jammy Dodger, the meeting starts in earnest...

"Now, you all know why you're here," continues Mr Krisalis. "By the end of this session I want an idea for a top game to be released in Autumn 1993. Anyone got any suggestions?"

"How about a footy game? They always go down well," says one.

"Hmmm, yeah, a Kick Off 2 beater," murmurs another. "With really tiny sprites so you could set up tactical plays. That'd be sensible. In fact, you could call it Sensible Soc..."

"No no no!" roars Mr Krisalis. "It'd never sell. I want *new* ideas!"

"What about a platform game?" somebody pipes up. "You know, Sonic and Mario are very big on the consoles. How about doing something similar on the Amiga?"

"The main character could be something small, like an ant maybe," says another. "Perhaps he could have Ninja skills or something. And come from another dimension..."

"Aaargh! I am surrounded by fools!" screams Mr Krisalis, going a nasty shade of purple. "Can nobody here come up with *anything* fresh and exciting?"

"How about a football game and a platform game mixed together?" says a low voice from the back of the room. All eyes turn. It's Ms Tightskirt.

There are cries of "Ridiculous!", "Preposterous!" and "Ludicrous!" then evryone starts to laugh. Everyone, that is, except Mr Krisalis.

"Silence!" he booms. "Please continue, Ms Tightskirt."

"Well, you could set the game in 1994, at the time of World Cup Finals in America. The World Cup trophy could be stolen by an alien who accidentally breaks it into five pieces which he scatters around the globe. The player's job would then be to try and reclaim these pieces by guiding a little kid through 28 levels of platforms, using a football to bash the nasties he encounters along the way. You could call it... Soccer Kid!"

Mr Krisalis pauses then rumbles "Ms Tightskirt, that is one of the best ideas for a game I have ever heard. You are hereby promoted to boss of everything. Take an immediate rise in salary to £500,000 backdated to before you were born. As for the rest of you... you're all sacked! Oh, and one last thing Ms Tightskirt..."

"Yes?" Ms Tightskirt replies, undoing her hairclip, allowing her long, flowing blonde hair to tumble around her perfectly-formed shoulders, and removing her glasses, thus revealing that she is actually the most beautiful woman on Earth.

"...Will you marry me?"

"No way, ugly" she laughs, climbing into her new Jaguar XJ220 and revving it up. "I'm off to have a romantic dinner with Take That."

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In the last zone of each world area you have to face the inevitable big nasty. There's Gareth the rugby player in England (Wales, surely?), Paverelli the opera singer in Italy, the Female Gymnast Assassin in Russia, Sarky the Sumo wrestler in Japan and Chuck the crazed footballer in America. Each has their own special attack patterns and they're all murderously tough, I can tell you.

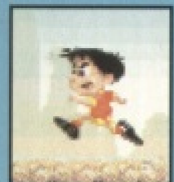
SOCCER KID

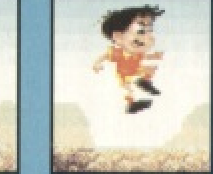
Er, quite remarkable. It appears that Krisalis have created one of the finest Amiga platform games ever. Over to David Upchurch for a full report...

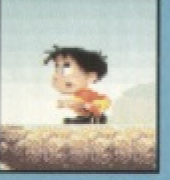


SKIII-ILLS!

My, isn't Soccer Kid an athletic little thing? Take a look at all this stuff he can do with just a flick of the joystick...


He can run!

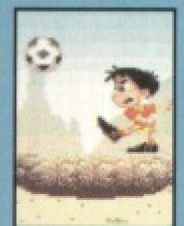

He can jump!

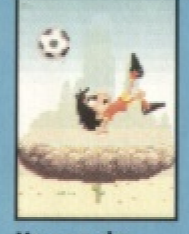

He can duck! (Quack.)

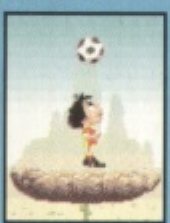
He can slide tackle! (Good for getting through narrow passages.)

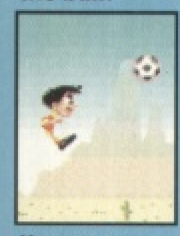
He can roll on the ball!

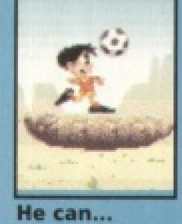
He can bounce off the ball!


He can kick the ball!


He can do overhead kicks!

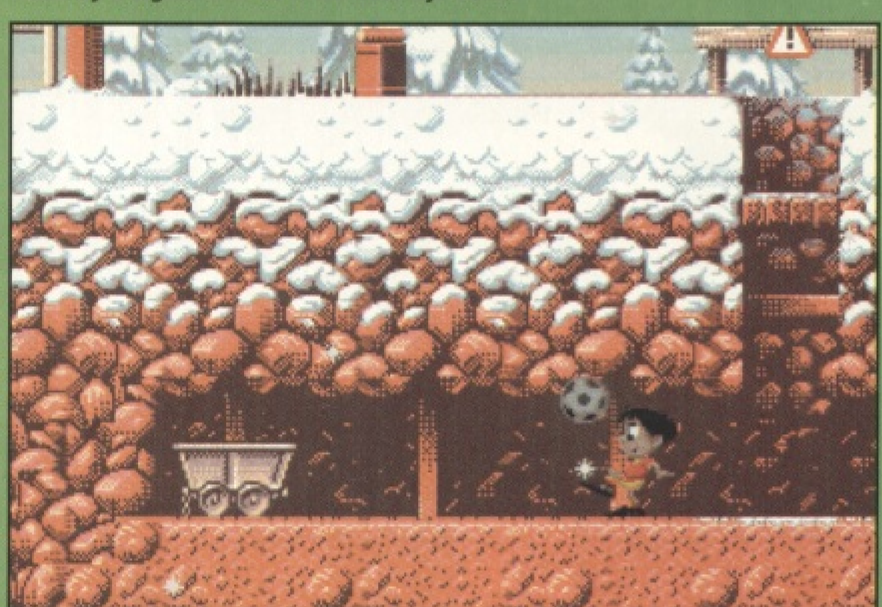

He can head the ball!


He can perform flying headers!

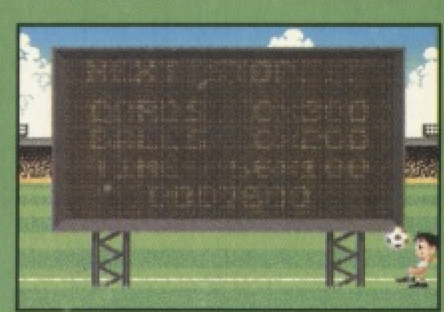

He can... (That's enough 'stuff' now. - The whole world.)

(Far left) At the start of each level, and at other key points in each level, you'll often come across little spinning blocks with exclamation marks on them floating in the sky. If you hit them with the ball they explode into a message box, telling you important info like how many cards are hidden on the level and how many balls you can summon before your bonus starts going down.

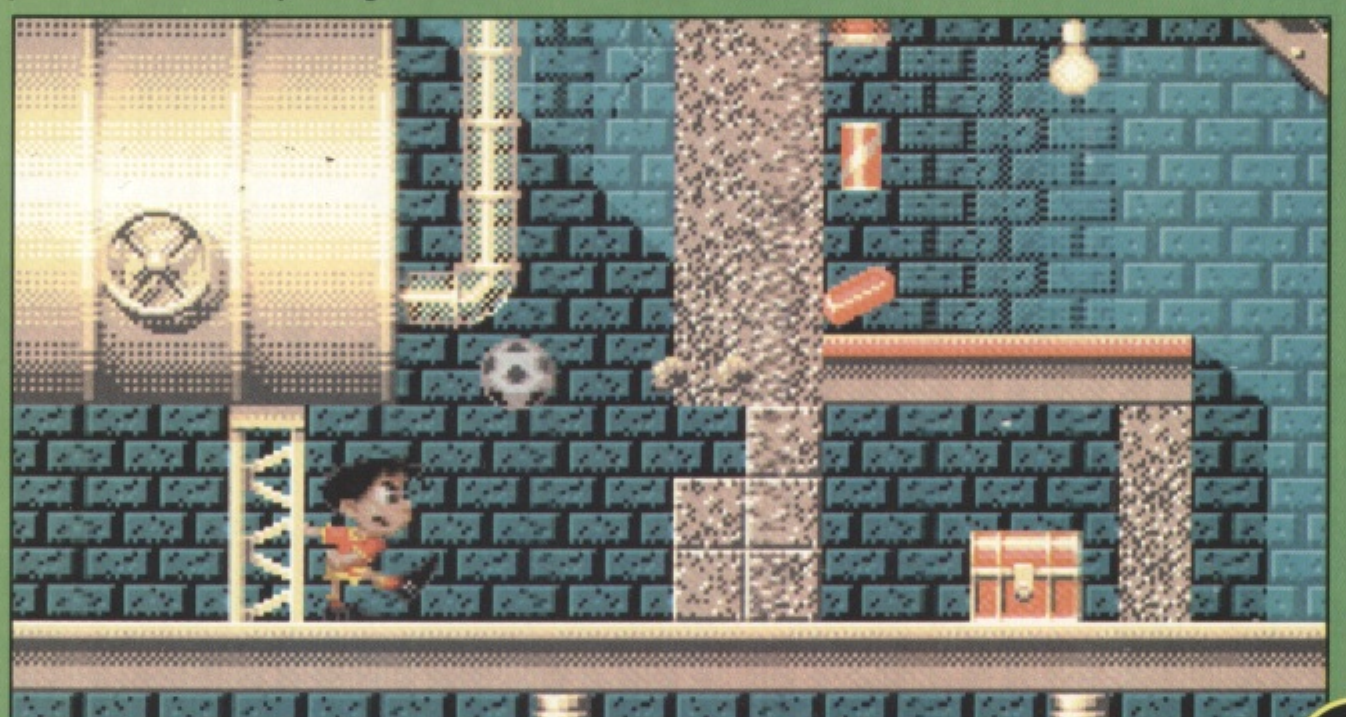

One of the hardest levels appears in Japan, which sees the Kid riding aboard an express Bullet Train. Rather than doing the sensible thing and buying a ticket and sitting inside he instead opts to run along the roofs of the carriages. Doh! Death can comes in many forms here but mostly from either falling off the train onto the tracks below or getting whacked in the head by a signal arm as it whizzes by. Duck!


Ah - secrets, secrets. Most of the really special bonuses are hidden away and you'll have to hunt them down to get the really big scores. Often this involves jumping between narrow, crumbling ledges but sometimes you can find goodies in secret underground passages. If you see a piece of ground that looks strange then crouch down and tap Fire - you may be surprised to see the Kid slip through the floor into a whole new world..


Often you'll get into a situation where you'll ball-less. Maybe it fell on some spikes? Or it got stuck down a hole? Or you simply lost it? Whatever. Don't despair, though, because by holding down Fire you can magic up a new ball in moments. In each level you are given a limited number of spare balls and the more you use up the smaller a bonus you'll get at the end of the zone.


After completing a zone you're brought here to the scoreboard, where your performance is analysed and bonus points awarded accordingly. This score varies depending on how many cards you collected, how many spare balls you've got in reserve and the number of trickshots you performed (with the number of points increasing with the difficulty of the shot). You also get a nice congratulatory message and a warning of what lies ahead. Good of them, isn't it?

(Below) More ball hilarity! The Kid's football is a tough little thing, so tough in fact that it can even be used to knock down crumbly walls and open chests. Chests are the resting places of the game's power-ups, such as health restorers, limited invincibility icons, speed-up shoes and extra lives.



CUP QUEST!

Soccer Kid's 28 levels are spread over five areas of the world each containing five or six levels each. Every area is split down further into three zones. Here's a rough guide to them all, but sadly we couldn't afford to get Magenta De Vine to be your host so you'll have to make do with me instead...

5 AMERICA

Golly-gee! It's the US of A, home to 1994's World Cup Finals - make the most of it as Soccer Kid will probably be the only English footballer to make it this far. Here the Kid has to avoid irate indians in the Wild West, deadly dudes on the beach and murderous muggers in the city. Very friendly, those Americans. Oh, and did you remember to get all the fragments of the World Cup while you travelling around? No? Oh dear...

3 RUSSIA

Brrrr - bit nippy! Obviously the Kid doesn't feel the Siberian cold too much as he's still wearing his T-shirt and shorts - must have had some Ready Brek before he came out (it's central heating for kids, you know). After this sub-zero charade he has to negotiate Red Square and even a battleship. Kid's today, eh? Next stop...





1 ENGLAND

Soccer Kid begins his globe-trotting escapades right here in Merry Old Blighty. After a trot through his home town he heads into the countryside and eventually ends up in London (as you can tell from Big Ben in the background). Soon he bids goodbye to rainy skies, warm beer and 'friendly' policemen and flies to...



2 ITALY

Italy, home of pizza, gondolas and people riding stupid little mopeds with their girlfriends. Here the Kid has to hop through some crumbly Roman ruins, skip through the dangerous waterways of Venice and jump about the beach on the Italian Riviera. Once he's had enough of the Mediterranean sun it's off to...

4 JAPAN

Rubbery! After a pleasant stroll through the attractive Japanese countryside the Kid's adventure takes him on a hair-raising journey aboard a Bullet Train terminating in a super-efficient automated factory. Look out for the robots - they're not as deactivated as they look!





THE VERDICT

Glumph again! I thought it'd be a long time before I'd see a platform game that would better Team 17's wondrous Superfrog but here, just a few short months later, is Soccer Kid. It is, perhaps, a little unfair to compare the two side by side as, although they're both obviously card-carrying members of the genre, there's little similarity between them beyond the fact that both's main characters spend a lot of their time teetering on narrow ledges. For while Superfrog is all speed and no depth, Soccer Kid's emphasis is more on thought and skill and is all the more satisfying for it - you get a huge buzz from pulling off a trickshot or downing a nasty with a nifty header. Although you might think that the Kid sounds quite difficult to control, what with his ball flying everywhere, actually quite the opposite is true. Somehow the ball always seems to be at your feet and you can learn the essential moves in moments, leaving the trickier shots until you're a bit more experienced. Graphically Soccer Kid is nothing short of incredible - it's fast, colourful, wonderfully animated and there are loads of neat touches, like the way snow will fall off the trees in Siberia if you kick your ball into them. Special mention has to go to the excellent parallaxed backdrops - they put the Super NES to shame. The sound is equally impressive, with a new catchy tune for just about every zone. Soccer Kid has been in development for a long time, and you can tell why as soon as you pick up the joystick - every aspect of the game is so smooth and polished you can see your face in it. I haven't been so excited by a game for ages and I'm sure you'll share my enthusiasm when you play it. Soccer Kid is, to put it simply, in a class of its own.





Fully compatible. The programmer has used the A1200's extra memory to store key screens and reduce the already minimal disk swapping but apart from that it's the same game. However, Krisalis are promising an A1200-specific version for later in the year, if you can wait that long.



WHAT A CARD!

Soccer Kid's ultimate aim, apart from staying alive, is to try and find all the lost pieces of the World Cup. To do this you must first find the special footballer cards hidden in each zone. There are eleven cards in total, and if you collect them all you go into a special sub-game (shown below) where your task is to collect all the bonus items and get to the exit before the timer runs out - do that and you earn a cup piece. As there are three zones in each world area you get three chances to get each piece. Should you fail to get all the cup pieces you can still complete the game, you just won't see the full end sequence.



MEAN ARENAS

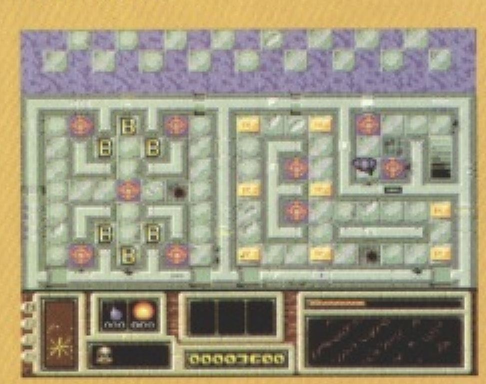
All we said was "as much money as you can collect before someone kills you" and with that Matt Broughton sprinted off into the distance, never to be seen again.

The year is 2093 and, as someone recently said to me, set your game in the future and you can get away with murder. Mean Arenas is no exception, being set in a time when every industry has been totally automated by machines and unemployment is at an all-time high. Only one industry has remained and that's good old telly.

Mind you, it's cost the government huge amounts of cash in grants to the TV networks, as the shows have had to become incredibly spectacular in order to keep the unemployed populace entertained and avoid unrest. In this dystopia of mass-media mind control one show reigns supreme, a show that gives ordinary folks like you and me the opportunity to leave behind their dull, poverty-lives by winning a fortune in the dangerous game that is... Mean Arenas.

''Hello, good evening and bollo....' Oops, wrong show - and wrong magazine. This is Mean Arenas and your hosts are the charming and never swearing Buzz and Bob. Now's your chance to collect money and prizes as you work your way through 26 maze/arenas, unlocking doors, teleporting between locations, toggling switches, dodging missiles and generally trying to stay alive. And, as you'd expect from such a Running Man-inspired plot, there are many and varied robotic guardians trying their best to shmack you around and generally kill you.

Are you man enough to play? Are you desperate enough to play? You must be...



As you can see, the screens are varied in layout and you'll need to make good use of the scanner (bottom left of the screen) if you want to get through a level without running backwards and forwards like a nutter. There are four different modes available showing either coins, guardians, both or just a general map of the level and these prove essential in clearing the level of coins.



Help is sometimes on offer in the arena in the form of information left on computer disks. When passed over, these disks will log you onto the computer (inset) which then presents you with either a slightly cryptic hint or a password for that level. The passwords capture all of your current stats so you if you restart that level you'll begin with the same number of lives and health points.

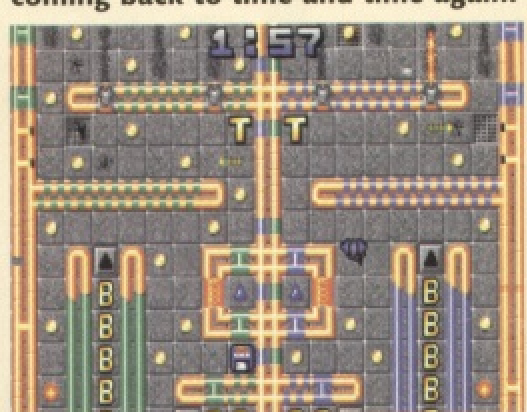
THE VERDICT

Marvellous! That's what the sampled game show host says when you complete a level and that's what this game is - bloody marvellous! At first Mean Arenas seems very simple, but once you get into it there's just so much going on it's overwhelming. Pacman with brass knobs on I suppose is the best way to describe it - but then look how popular that was in its day. You can dive straight into the game without even thinking about it, but after a level or two you start to realise how much thought needs to go into successfully completing each level as they become less arcade orientated and more puzzle/logic-based. The aliens are many and varied and all have slightly different characteristics, again adding another dimension to the gameplay. The sound is good throughout, with the sampled crowd and commentator comments add to the general atmosphere of a humourously naff game show. I'm pleased to see that the programmers have included a password system that records your attributes (in a Chaos Engine-y kind of way), as it means you don't have to keep replaying old levels while at the same time not making the game too easy. Despite the slightly iffy graphics there's not really a lot to fault with Mean Arenas - while breaking no barriers in originality, it manages to combine a number of game ideas to make a surprisingly addictive and enjoyable game that I found myself coming back to time and time again.



A1200

Once again I'm afraid that I have some bad news for A1200 owners as there is not a single difference between the standard and A1200 version. Sorry about that. Run along now.



Speed arenas differ to the normal ones in that they are completely puzzle-based. There's a strict time limit in which to complete the level and a large number of bonuses to be collected. The heart beat away in the background does nothing for your nerves either.

DIGGERS

Yes! The first original Amiga CD32 game is here! David Upchurch plops the CD in the machine and sits trembling, waiting to experience the start of a new era of Amiga gaming...



This is the Zargon Minister For Mining. He's a brusque sort and, if it's your first visit, will tersely instruct you to select a race of diggers and a zone to mine then clear off. Once that's done you can start your quest for riches and fame. Each time you 'win' a zone you return here to select your next field of conquest, at which point you're also given the option to save the game.



What a miserable-looking bunch! These bankers trade cash for gems and ore - just the sorts of things, in fact, that you're likely to find in your mines. Each type of gem/ore has a different value which you can discover by clicking on the signs above each creature's head. Often you'll find that there isn't a merchant dealing in the type of stuff you've found, in which case it's best to go away and come back later in the hope that a new banker's turned up.

This is where it all starts at the Zargon Trading Centre. All you have to do is click on that bloke sitting at his desk in the middle of the screen to register your company and off you go. At any time during the game you can come back here to visit the merchants or the equipment shop.

Hooray! Purchase power! Once you've found a few gems and cashed them up you can come here to buy some equipment. On offer are such goodies as a mechanical excavators for faster tunnelling, explosive for blowing holes in cave walls, lifts (always handy a the diggers tend not to like long falls) and loads more. The trick is balancing your need for better equipment against the fact that each purchase pulls you further away from the cash target you need to win a zone



Got your miners? Selected a zone? Bought some equipment? Yeah? Great - now you can start digging! You can cycle through the five diggers in your team with a tap on the joypad. Another tap then brings up an icon-driven menu allowing you to make your selected digger walk, dig (in up to seven directions), pick up or drop specific items (like gems or dynamite), teleport back to base, scavenge for goodies and so on. It's all very easy, mainly thanks to the highly-versatile six-button joypad.

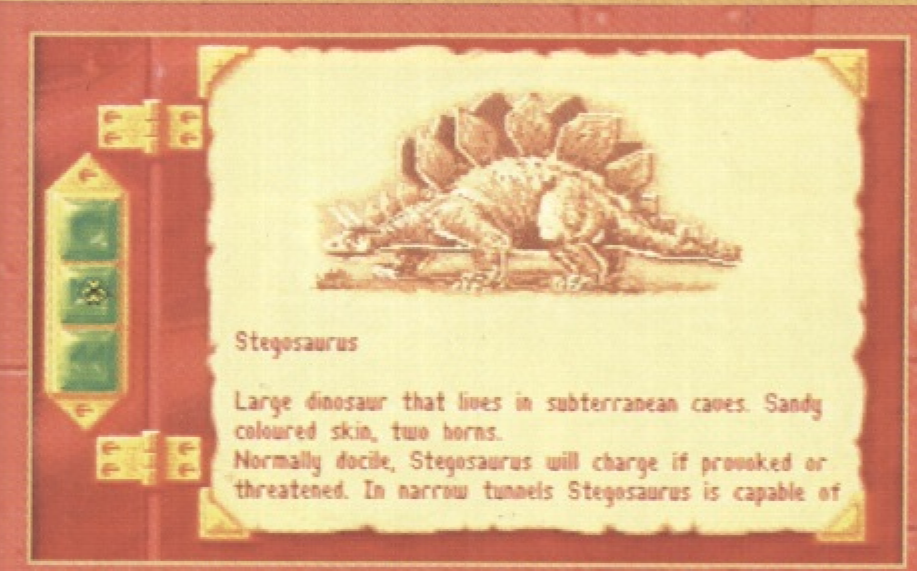
On the planet Zarg it's the eve of the 412th day of the year. All across the alien world the F'Targs, the Quarriors, the Grablins and the Habbish are finding it hard to get to sleep such is their excited anticipation of the day to come. No, Santa Claus isn't coming to town - it's the beginning of the new month-long mining season, when rival corporations fight for control of the planet's ore-rich surface. And as they'll need to hire F'Targs, Quarriors, Grablins and Habbish miners to do the digging for them, this means lots of cash-in-hand, no-questions-asked riches for the locals.

Such is the plot to Diggers, the latest from Millennium and the first original game for Commodore's all-singing, all-dancing CD console, the Amiga CD32. You play the boss of one of the many contending mining corporations with aspirations to greatness through digging.

Before you can start excavating, you must first hire a five-strong team of miners. You have a choice between the four races mentioned earlier, each of which have varying strengths and weaknesses: the F'Targs are a nippy but easily distracted; the Quarriors are super-strong but intensely stupid and slow; the dwarf-like Grablins are good at mining but crap at fighting; and the Habbish are mysterious druidic creatures with a low attention span. Pick wisely, as you'll stick with the same team for the rest of the game!

Zarg is split into seventy-odd 'zones' and to achieve complete control of the mining rights to the planet you must 'win' each of these zones one by one, achieved by raising a certain amount of cash (by mining, of course). To complicate matters, and to keep the spirit of competition alive, there's a rival mining company in each zone which'll do its best to put you out of the picture. Best advice? Get them before they get you by flooding their mines (he-he!).

So, in the words of Status Quo: Down down, deeper and down; down down, deeper and down... (Repeat until fade.)



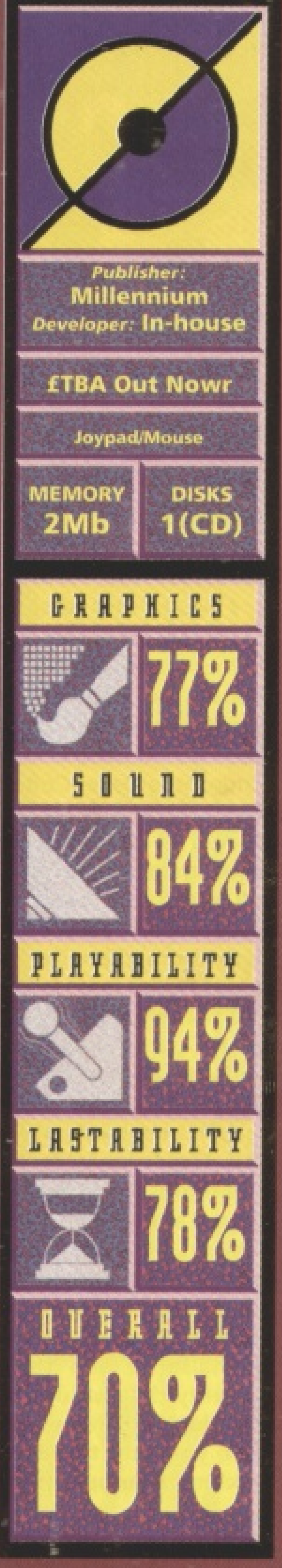
To help you along the Zargon authorities kindly give you a handbook. It's kind of a How To Get Ahead In Mining-style tome, containing info on various aspects of the planet Zarg, its strange and often hostile inhabitant, the four digger races, mining and how to become good at it plus loads of other stuff. This can be accessed at any time during the game and is utterly indispensable.



Gems and lumps of ore appear at random as new tunnel areas are created, which should then be picked up and sent back to base as soon as possible. It's a slow but sure way of raising cash but a better move is to seek out deep chambers or air pockets in the rock, as often these contain many precious elements just waiting to be picked up. Alternatively you could try and locate your rivals, duff them up and nick their goodies. It's up to you.

THE VERDICT

Despite some nice CD-quality music (naturally), first impressions of Diggers aren't too hot. Oh, the intro and the set-up screens are pretty, with a vivid use of 256 colours, but the game itself is, well, dull-looking, to be frank. To be fair I suppose there's not a lot of scope for graphic flair when it comes to caves and the digger graphics have to be small out of necessity (otherwise you wouldn't be able to plan out what you want to do and where you want to go) but all the same you do feel the first game for the CD32 ought to be more visually impressive than this. Once you get over that graphical disappointment, however, you discover that the game is none too inspiring either - at first, anyway. Getting anywhere is a slow, laborious process, much like the real mining process, and, even though you only have five diggers in your team, managing them properly and making sure they don't get bored and wander off into a nasty creature or deadly pool of water is not easy. This, combined with the game's slow pace, makes the game quite a chore to play. It's only after several hours, when you've learnt a few mining and man-management techniques, that the game starts to become enjoyable. Even then, though, the game could hardly be classed as exciting. Diggers is a big game which you could, if you've got the patience to put the hours in, find long-lasting and entertaining. Most, however, will simply find it boring.





Millennium are planning to release cut-down versions of Diggers for the A1200 and the A500/600. Quite when they'll appear or how much will have to be left out is unknown at the moment. However, it's unlikely that the basic gameplay will change much.



THE PATRICIAN

It would seem as though travelling back and forth through time and trading is all that Matt Broughton ever does. Not even stopping in 1869 this time, he's off to the 14th century to sell goose grease and muck about in boats. Oh well, as long as he brings us all back a stick of rock....

If you're one of those people - and I know I was - who think that the Hanseatic League is the one below the Scottish Premier on Grandstand then think again. In fact, the Hanseatic League was a kind of medieval Common Market that covered towns from London to Novgorod and countries from Germany up to Sweden. You can always tell when I've been reading and once again I've been given a game with more than its fair share of pages in the manual department - 120 to name but, er, 120.

The game's all about money, basically. Back in the 14th Century, circumstances conspired to make certain merchants of the time very rich. Their money broke the power and regressive stranglehold of the church and monarchy on European society. Through personal investments in building, science, education, art and culture these merchants created the seeds of the Rennaisance and the notions of equality that would spread across the Old World in the years to follow.

If you cut through this large wedge of bumph, however, you'll find yet another historically-accurate trading game that bears more than a striking resemblance to 1869, reviewed by myself a scant month ago. As a medieval merchant you seek not only trading supremacy but political power, diverting your money into funding - both legally and illegally - your campaign to become first mayor and ultimately Alderman (or boss) of the whole Hanseatic League.

Many ships and people will need to be managed and manipulated along the way if you want to beat the opposition as they do their best to get there first. Mind you, let's not forget that this is the 14th Century, a time beset by piracy and plague, and not the easiest place to rise above the rest. Be strong, be bold, but most of all, be nasty!



Every now and then you will find yourself approached by this twisted old marriage broker who will offer you his matchmaking skills for a price. Should you accept, he will offer you either a tasty young maiden (like this Madonna look-alike) or some nasty old trout (inset). Marriage has advantages, i.e. a dowry, which may be anything from good family trading connections to inheriting ships. Unfortunately, it's normally the trouts with the best deals.



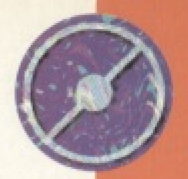
Here in the shipyard you can repair, order, name, scrap and arm ships as you please - providing you've got the cash. Just to add to the realism, the workmen will overcharge you for any work required so it pays to keep coming back to them for different quotes. The shipyard manager will give you a free ship inspection at any time (inset); basically, the better the ship's condition, the faster the journey and the larger the capacity.



Ah, the open sea and the salty smell of dogs, or something. From here you can sail anywhere you fancy and trade until your arms fall off. The journey is represented by a calendar (inset) that informs you of any interesting events. If you find out that pirates have been spotted near your destination it might be time to learn how to swim.

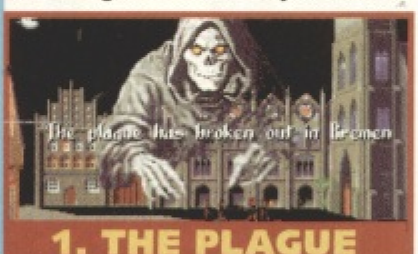


It was as true in the 14th Century as it is today that the best way to get into politics is to have baths with prominent members of the council, not to mention bribing them with large wads of cash. Any opportunity to squeeze into a tub with a politician (inset) should be jumped at as you could find a mysterious advantage coming your way in the next local election.



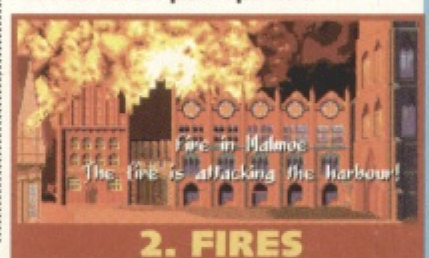
TWO REASONS NOT TO LIVE IN THE 14th CENTURY...

Always a lot of fun this, especially if you're into pus and losing limbs. The good thing about the plague is that you can move house to the town affected and if you're really lucky your trout of a wife will die allowing you to marry again, receiving another dowry. I like it!



1. THE PLAGUE

Well, what do you expect if you make houses out of wood? Fires do a fair amount of damage, often making the town unfit to trade in until time has passed and the damage has been repaired. Roll on the discovery of asbestos. Or perhaps not.



2. FIRES



The town square is another menu in disguise giving you access to the baths, the guildhall, your wagon and more. Clicking on the jester gives the option for a feast to be held in your name, while clicking on the other group gives you a popularity poll. Entering the church (inset) offers you the chance to rise in stature by donating money to various causes.



This acts as one of the main menu screens giving you access to your office, warehouse, the town hall, the blacksmith, the moneylender and the town square - not to mention the local pub (inset). Here you can hire workers, ship crew and buy arms. The dodgy bloke up the back is a pirate and can be hired to take your ship and plunder some innocents, but dealing with men like this means you may never see your ship again.



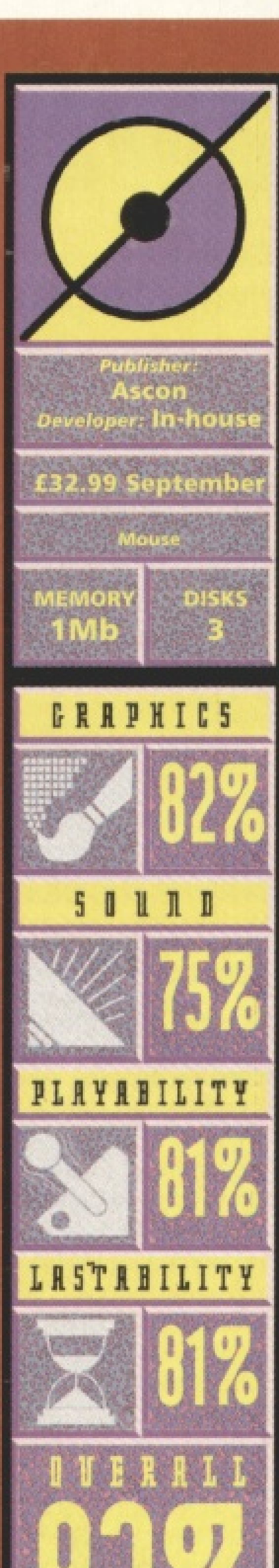
ware	town	ship	price
corn	1248	0	77
meat	81	3	94
fish	68	0	81
ale	305	6	57
honey	36	0	222
cloth	180	0	176
crockery	180	0	164
wood	540	0	64
wine	239	1	494

buy

You have an office in every town allowing you to keep a constant check on your business. Here you can check on debts owed, ship conditions and current locations as well as organise future trips. All trading decisions are made using of the large book on your desk (inset) in which all the produce buying and selling prices can be surveyed along with their availability.

THE VERDICT

This is the game that 1869 should have been; it has more character, more depth and better presentation. The trading is more difficult than it was in 1869 which means that it's actually a challenge to make money rather than just a process of the game, and with the large number of commodities to trade in you really need to be constantly planning and noting current market trends to make a good enough profit to carry on. The historical background adds a tremendous amount of atmosphere as you understand why some towns will specialise in certain items while others are prone to pirate attacks. Being able to quickly expand your fleet gives an excellent feeling of power as your ships report in from their various locations around the world, while all the time you're reminded of the importance of progressing politically as well as financially. The game is also staggered quite cleverly so that even after playing for a good few hours new options are opened up to you as you grow in power. I didn't get to play this against a human opponent which is a shame as I'm sure it adds a hell of a lot to the competitive side, being able to plot against your mate and hiring pirates to plunder their ships - not to mention beating them in the elections. The game is extremely user-friendly and overall there are no grumbles, though the accessing time between screens can be a tad frustrating after a while on the standard version. This has been an enormous hit in Germany for quite some while now and though I'm not sure if people will really take an interest in the historical elements of the game, this is a deep and competitive game offering an excellent number of 'sub games' that keep it from being repetitive. It's trade-tastic, mate

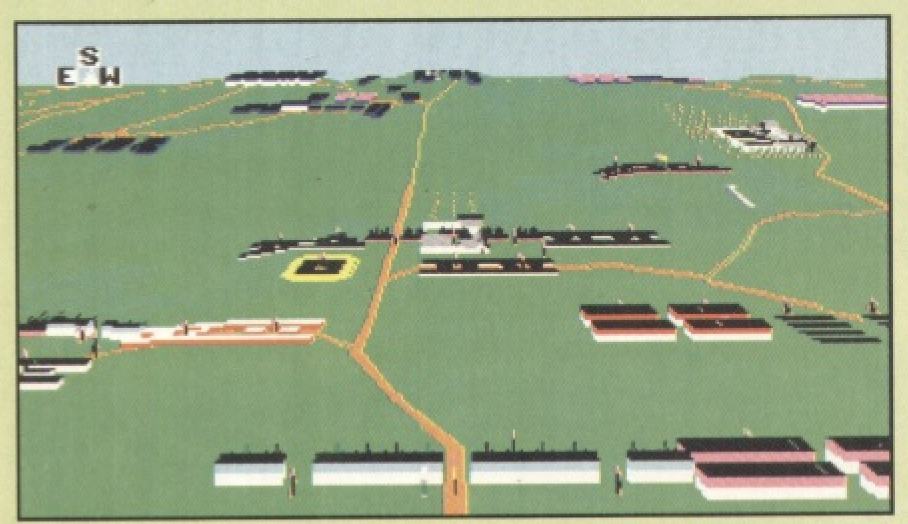




Although there's no specific version, the game gains a few percent on both playability and overall when played on the A1200 mainly due to the improved continuity. Though it takes longer to set up as the machine loads more to start with, it's worth it as you avoid waiting that couple of seconds between each screen.

NAPOLEONICS

Guest reviewer Jamie Kavanagh, work experience lad extraordinaire, tries his hand at the fine art of computer-based wargaming...



This is your view from your HQ. By clicking on the various objects on the battlefield you can get info on what they are, whether they're friendly or not and even what the name of the town is, assuming it is a town, that is. In fact, all the stuff you need to make your strategic planning easier.

Look, I know that 1992's been and gone and we're meant to be pally with the good people of Europe and all that but I'm afraid I've got to draw the line at the French. Ever since an unfortunate, not to say embarrassing, incident involving a croissant, a slice of brie and a black beret while on holiday in Provence once, I've had nothing but hatred for them.

So it was with some glee that I booted up Napoleonics. Here was my chance to kick a few Frog butts. The game recreates three major battles from Napoleon's era - The Battles Of Austerflitz (1805), Borodine (1812 and Waterloo (1815) - and gives you complete control over the many and varied units in either side (though I didn't play the French, for obvious reasons). You can play against the computer or a friend, though how long they'll remain so after you've coerced them into playing this is debatable.

However, while this is all very nice, on question lingers: Why, in this age of stealth bombers, laser-guided weapons and nuclear missiles, do CCS think we need a strategy game where you control little blokes on horses and smaller men with crappy muskets? I don't know - maybe it's the lack of violence.

You see, on the evidence presented in Napoleonics wars were a lot more sedate in ye olden dayes. During the game you'll see no dead bodies, no gore and no explosions (when you let rip with a cannon all you get is a little puff of smoke and that's it). Even if your troops are massacred all you're told is that they've been 'disorganised', whatever that means.

Still, a wargame doesn't have to be blood-soaked to be any fun (although it helps). After all, you must bear in mind that War Is Hell and not a source of light entertainment. And, it has to be said, if that's the message the good Doctor was trying to get across with Napoleonics he sure as heck succeeded...

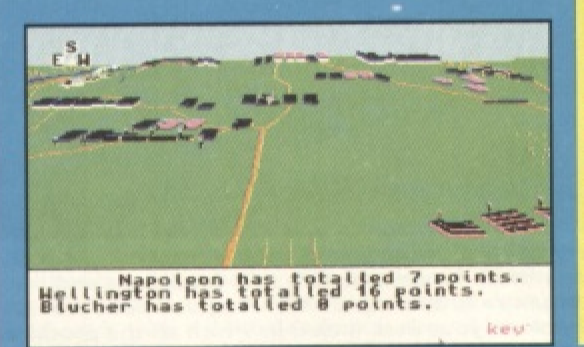
Mail: Orange , a message has arrived from Macdonnell. 12 15 pm , my division has captured Hougoumont.

The game uses a 'turns'-based system, much like a traditional tabletop wargame. Each turn you can choose to move all, some or none of your troops around by sending orders to the commanders of your various units. These orders are typed in to an adventure game-like parser and can get quite complex.

THE VERDICT

Napoleonics tries to be a bit different to the other strategy games doing the rounds yet, while this attempt at innovation is laudable, the end result is a game system that doesn't really work all that well. The worst thing about the game is the sheer lack of pace. Typing in the orders is a slow, laborious process and it takes ages for the people under your command to receive them and act on them. This may well be an accurate simulation of the communication problems that beset 'real' generals in the 1800s but it doesn't half make playing the game a drag. Even worse the orders parser requires you to be so precise about what you type in that you spend half your time struggling to get the syntax correct. You also have to know the names of the commanders of the units you want to direct, which slows things down even more. On top of all that it takes an eon for the turns to cycle around, typically between 5 to 10 minutes, so you can see that winning a battle is going to take you a good few days, assuming you've got the patience to stick it out. Few points are scored on the aesthetic side either. The graphics are... well... different and look like they were drawn on a Spectrum, while the sound is quite literally non-existent. You'd have to a real wargaming sad case to get any enjoyment out of this dull, dull mess.







The 3D graphics update slightly faster, thus improving the flow of the game and substantially increasing your enjoyment. Even so this is still one game to be avoided.



FISTFIGHTER

Matt Broughton tightens his orange belt, shouts Kiai (again) and scores a Wazarri against Zeppelin's latest budget release.

Picture the scene, if you will... Martyn Brown walks into the meeting room at Team 17's head office, his head hanging low. The other team members sense his mood and wait for him to speak. "I have some very bad news," he says, tears welling in his eyes, "Fistfighter has been released." The Team 17 staff gasps in unison realising the implications of this dreadful news. "In the face of such impressive competition, I'm left with no other option" Martyn continues, now quite visibly distressed. "I'm taking Body Blows off the shelves and closing down the company." Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha! - only joking, God bless you!

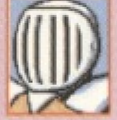
I do apologise for that little outburst but I just couldn't resist it, for here we have Fistfighter, the latest release from Zeppelin. It's a sub-standard mix between Body Blows and Full Contact, with eight fighters toughing it out in Egypt, Japan and the US of A. Each fighter is blessed with a limited number of moves, including punches, kicks and blocks, plus a mystery 'special move' unique to each competitor. The game has no plot, which is just as well because it would probably be pretty embarrassing if the game is anything to go by. I'm hard pushed to think of anything neutral to say so I'll hold my tongue until I'm let loose in the Verdict, alright?

THE FIGHTERS AND THEIR WILY WAYS...

TAI PING
A deadly kickboxing champ with the latest in helicopter kicks.



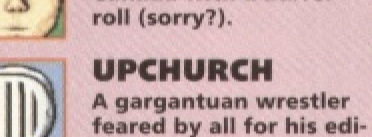
SIR GERRY
A man from the past with a big mace.



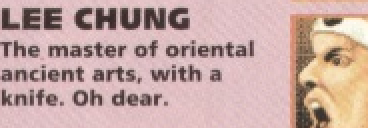
ANNA
Phwoar! A demure gymnast (yes!) with a whirlwind punch.

GINO
A kickboxer from Sicily with a rapid hammer-fist.

JC
A man-bear from Canada with a barrel roll (sorry?).



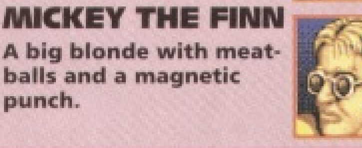
UPCHURCH
A gargantuan wrestler feared by all for his editorial flying drill.

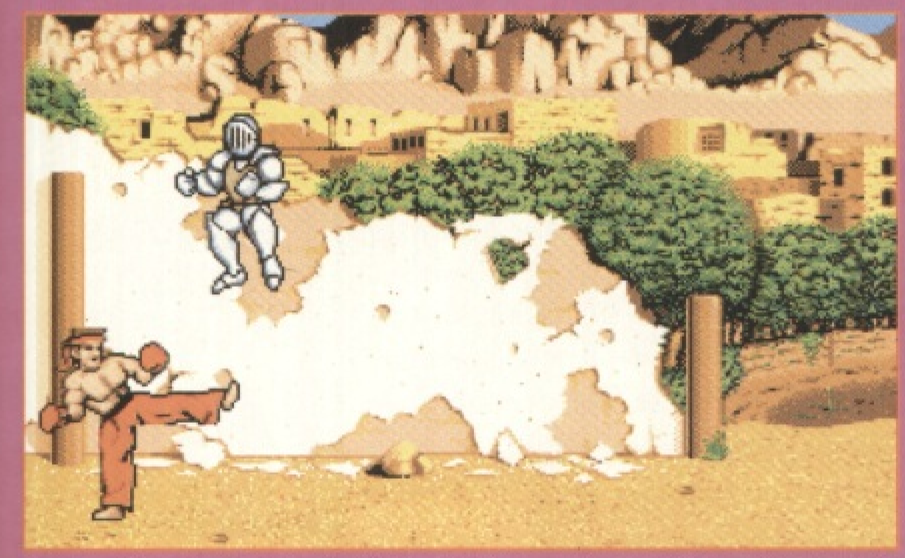


LEE CHUNG
The master of oriental ancient arts, with a knife. Oh dear.



MICKEY THE FINN
A big blonde with meat-balls and a magnetic punch.





You wouldn't think that a knight in shining armour would be agile enough to go up against a kickboxer, but as you can see here Sir Gerry isn't doing too badly against Gino. If things get a bit too much for the old knight, he can always use his 'special' - a huge spikey mace. Isn't that cheating, though?

THE VERDICT

Oh my word. I thought the days when you laughed this hard at games were over. Being a competitive sort of chap, I called Mr Upchurch (his worshipfulness sometimes lets me call him that if I've been good) into the games room and duly challenged him to a quick bash - the hospital says that he's doing quite nicely and should stop laughing by October. This really does belong to yesteryear even if it is at budget price. The graphics themselves don't look too bad but it's all let down by the poor collision detection and computer intelligence; the computer opponent edges towards you in its blocking pose and occasionally trying to hit, so all you have to do is keep throwing punches until it looks up and - shmack! - we are the champions. The computer hardly ever performs its special moves and as soon as you do yours your opponent just starts jumping around the screen like a demented acrobat. The baddies all fight the same way, so once you've got the hang of things you can quite easily complete the game in a couple of tries - if that. As with all games like this it's a bit more fun with two players fighting but not that much. A couple of years ago this probably could have stood on the shelf without looking too silly but now it's a bit of a Christopher Biggins, if you know what I mean.



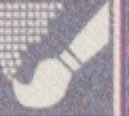
Publisher: Zeppelin Platinum
Developer: In-house

£9.99 Out Now

Joystick

MEMORY	DISKS
512K	1

GRAPHICS



50%

SOUND



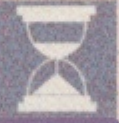
45%

PLAYABILITY



33%

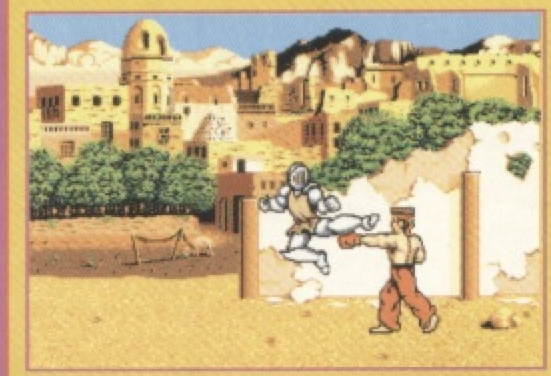
LASTABILITY



40%

OVERALL

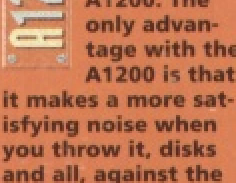
36%





There is no difference at all on the A1200. The only advantage with the A1200 is that it makes a more satisfying noise when you throw it, disks and all, against the bedroom wall.





FISTFIGHTER

BLADE OF DESTINY

It's big. Very big. Huge, even. Anyway, that's enough about David Upchurch's waistline. Travel with him to the Realms of Arkania for a look at US Gold's newest RPG



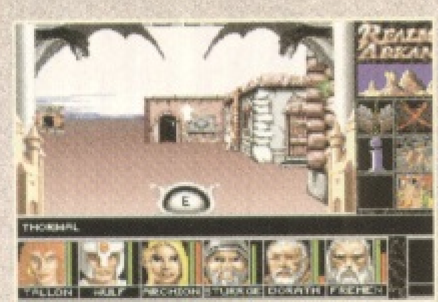
Like most aspects of Blade of Destiny, generating a hero for your party is a lengthy and comprehensive business. You have a variety of options open to you, such as what character class your hero will be, what sex they'll be, what they're called and what their stats are. If you don't fancy doing all this, however, you can take the easy way out and play with the game's pregenerated heroes.

So here we have Blade of Destiny, yet another entrant into the always popular and slightly over-crowded RPG genre. So what does Blade have in its favour to tempt the punter into parting with his or her hard-earned cash? Smooth-scrolling backgrounds like in Legends of Valour? An easy-to-use player interface like Eye of the Beholder 2? The simplicity of Worlds of Legend?

Nope, none of these. What Blade of Destiny has in spades is size. Attic claim that in the game there are over 184,000 square miles of territory to explore and more than 80 towns to visit. And I'm not going to argue with them. One glance at the 100+ page manual is enough to convince you that these boys definitely aren't kidding.

The plot is typical RPG fare. The orcs, those perennial fantasy bad guys, are on the rise again, threatening to invade the peaceful realm of Thorwal, and there's precious little to stop them doing it. Legend has it, however, that there exists a mighty sword, the Blade of Destiny of the title, which, if found, could stop the orcs dead in their trouble-causing tracks.

Of course you, being the heroic type, set out with a band of hardy fellow adventurers to find it. But it's not as simple as going from A to B, picking up the sword and coming home again. Oh no. You must travel from town to town, performing mini quests, in your search for clues to the sword's resting place. Have fun!



Exploring Arkania's many towns and dungeons is depicted using the familiar first-person 3D perspective. Walls flashing past you in 'jumps' and buildings mysteriously 'materialising' only when you're a few feet in front of them. It does little to convey the impression of a real urban sprawl.



In scraps the view switches to an isometric-3D 'plan' view, which allows you to make some tactical decisions about who attacks what and when. Each character has a limited number of movement points per turn which they can use to move, fight, flee, cast a spell or whatever. Like the main game it's painfully slow.

THE VERDICT

The main problem with Blade of Destiny is that you really have seen this sort of thing before - and better, most probably. There are few surprises as you travel around, with everyone and everything you meet conforming to their usual clichéd fantasy roles. Much has been made of Blade's size. True, the land of Arkania is a vast place, with literally dozens of towns to visit and dungeons that you can freely explore, but there's a big price to pay for this. For one thing the disk swapping on a single-drive machine is unbelievable - you can't seem to go more than ten yards without having to swap disks. The first-person exploring is a dull and tedious affair - the screen update is annoyingly sluggish, especially given the fact that you can't even 'see' the poorly-drawn buildings until you're practically standing in front of them. Combat is equally uninspiring - the boardgame-like 'movement points' system removes any sense of urgency or excitement from the proceedings while the characters slowly shuffle about the isometric-3D battlefields like they're on Valium. The best thing you can say about Blade is that it's nothing if not thorough, so it'll no doubt cause RPG addicts to perform cartwheels. But it doesn't really make any concessions to the average gamer, which leaves the majority of us standing out in the cold.



A1200 Blade runs slightly faster on the A1200 but still not as quickly as you feel it should do. Other than that there are no real differences.


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PREMIER MANAGER 2

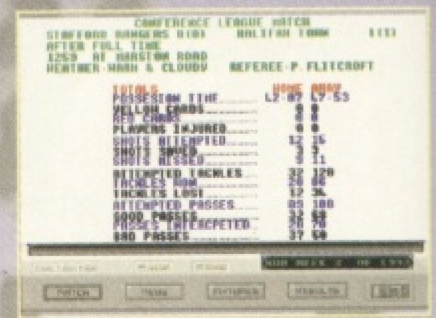
Stafford Rangers thought they were destined to be bottom of the league forever until Matt Broughton walked in, naked apart from a gumshield and a pair of shinpads. He was their new manager and he meant business in Gremlin's new footy management game.

Ah, football management games - the childhood memories flood back to me now. The only time I can recall playing a game of any sort that lasted more than six months was when I used to play Football Manager on the Spectrum with my dad. Many happy hours would be spent squashing those little rubber buttons in a desperate attempt to get Billy Bonds and the rest of the West Ham lads up to the top of the first division.

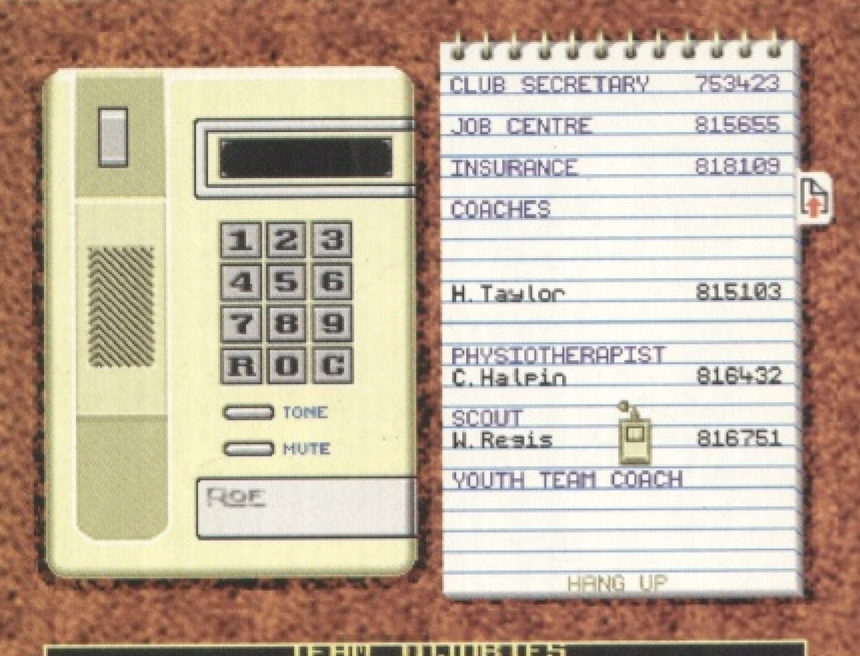
Christmas was even better as Uncle Stevie used to come round as well - oh, those crippling hours not being allowed to go to the toilet or eat or stop or, well, do anything other than play. If it wasn't for those happy Christmas holidays I wouldn't be the useless twisted cripple that I am today. Good old family entertainment.

Well, love 'em or hate 'em (to use a cliché - Ed.) football management games are definitely here to stay as Gremlin proved with Premier Manager earlier in the year, taking the best elements from the dozens of footy manager games that had already been released and refining it with innovative graphic representations. Now they're back with a sort of 'Son of Premier Manager', Premier Manager 2. Boasting more realism and features than PM1 this looks set to take the footy management genre to its limits.

There's definitely a strange pleasure to be achieved by taking one of the most hopeless football teams ever to plod across the pitches of the world and turn them into a mega-squad, kicking premier team. So, is PM2 the ultimate? Time to substitute the Verdict.



(Above) The Fax machine is just one of the various ways of viewing information in your office. From here you can check next week's fixtures and see last week's results, as well as read news on transfers that have taken place and general events concerning the club. One of the best reports available gives a blow-by-blow comparison of you and your opponent's performance in the previous game, highlighting your team's weaknesses - I think I'd best get down to some intense training!



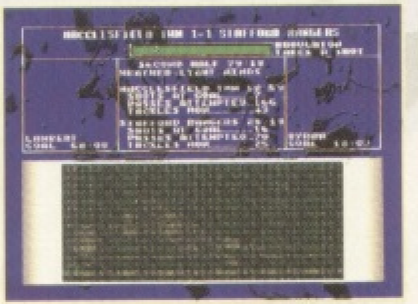
TEAM INJURIES

PLAYER	RATING	REASON	WKS	T
ABROOK	GOOD ★			
WEBB	FAIR ★★★★★			
BOTTEN	GOOD ★★			
TAYLOR	FAIR ★★★★★			
VELOCIRAPTOR	FAIR ★★★★			
VAI	FAIR ★★★★★			
STING	FAIR ★★★★			
BEBER	FAIR ★★★★			
BROUGHTON	GOOD ★			
UPCHURCH	FAIR ★★★★★			
BYRON	FAIR ★★★★★			
CLAPTON	FAIR ★★★★			
GUYVER	GOOD ★	BROKEN ARM	27	L
LYONS	FAIR ★★★★★	CONCUSSION	1	Y
KINDER	GOOD ★	GROIN	6	Y
KING	FAIR ★★★★★			

Thanks to Alexander Graham Bell you can always get in touch with your happy troops at a touch of a button, not to mention some other handy staff such as your coach and scout. You can hire these people from the job centre at the start of the season and change them as and when you see fit. The club secretary will give your performance a percentage score showing you what the directors and supporters think of you while the physio will report on any injured soldiers (inset).



This screen acts as your main control menu giving you access to the various options you will need to succeed: player transfers, ground improvements, ground sponsorship and squad selection can all be selected at the touch of a button along with the various statistical and financial reports, not to mention a calender for checking the next match date.



The matches are displayed in this unique style, with the pitch represented by the strip at the top and the ball moving to show current play. As well as statistical details, a commentary describes who has possession and what they are currently up to. Whenever major action occurs such as goals, near misses, fouls, etc., the screen cuts to show a 'score board' graphic to let you know what happened. Oh! That was a tremendous effort!



When it comes to selecting the squad you'll need to use this screen wisely to glean information about all the available players. As well as checking on each player's individual skill ratings and positions, you can examine each one in more detail to find out anything from what training they are currently involved in to which foot they favour. You can click through the available formations and check the star rating at the bottom of the screen to select the best overall squad.



Once you've selected your squad you can give them more specific instructions about what sort of game to play. As well as selecting the formation you can set general rules for tackling, marking, shooting, etc. The icons allow you to bring up comparitive details about your opposition as well as letting you make use of your physio to check on the players' health and fitness.

MANAGER 1 STAFFORD RANGERS 16:CONFERENCE
CONTRACT:1 £170866 MONDAY WEEK 3 OF 1993

YEARLY CLUB BANK STATEMENT

ITEMS	DEBIT	CREDIT
GATE RECEIPTS	0	4420
CLUB WAGES	4700	0
TRANSFER FEES	0	0
CLUB FINES	0	0
GRANTS FOR CLUB	0	0
CLUB BILLS	15266	0
MISCELLANEOUS SALES	0	6480
BANK LOAN PAYMENTS	0	0
GROUND IMPROVEMENTS	0	0
ADVERTISING BOARDS	0	54110
OTHER ITEMS	0	0
ACCOUNT INTEREST	0	822
THE YEARLY TOTAL	19966	65832

THE YEARLY BALANCE 45866
MONEY IN ACCOUNT £170866
OVERDRAFT LIMIT £250000

Ah, the root of all evil! This is where you can keep tabs on all your finances - things may look fairly controlled here but it's early days yet. After a few weeks things start to get a bit daunting and you'll find yourself reaching for a loan before you can say 'overdraft limit'. From here you can also check players' wages as well as look after ticket prices and current sponsorship. Don't spend too much money though or the board of directors will make their presence felt!

THE VERDICT



Good stuff this management business, isn't it? The power, the decisions, the injuries! Yup, I'm hooked. PM2 really does make it about as easy to manage a football team as I can imagine. The icon graphics make the game very easy to get into, giving you very clear pictures of what you're about to select, with an excellent number of statistics and figures available that don't swamp you. I jumped straight into this without even bothering to read the instructions and didn't come across anything that left me puzzled or confused. Even when I did read the instructions they just reinforced what I'd already found out for myself anyway. The team is very easy to manipulate and the star rating is excellent as it gives you a visual clue as to what are good and bad squad selections. The money management is more involved than you'd normally find, with sponsorships and ground improvements to be taken into consideration. The matches are nicely done too, with the little ball and commentary doing the job of telling you how each match is going just as well as if they'd tried to put in some game representation. The sound is fairly limited as you might expect, but there are some crowd effects during the game. It's good that the speed of the match can be controlled, as you might not want to watch every game in depth. This really is the best bits of all the footy games bundled together and laid out on a golden plate for you, so pick a team, put your managerial hat on and assume that 'hunched over the keyboard for hours' position that all true management game players have. Good stuff.



Not really a lot to say about the game running on the A1200 other than that the statistics appear fractionally faster. To be honest I doubt you'd notice unless you ran the two next to each other.

YO! JOE!

Play Byte's platform game is the surprise hit of the month, much to the annoyance of Simon Byron, the git.

I remember when life was easy. You used to be able to pick up a Dire Straits or Simply Red record and know that you were going to get the type of boring songs they play in shopping centres (although why they think some bloke waffling on about how he wants his MTV is likely to persuade you to spend more cash is beyond me. But - hey! - I'm not the one who makes those kind of decisions. If I was, though, I'd get rid of all the poncy names usually heaped on these modern complexes. Like Meadow Hall and The Dolphin Centre. Why not call them 'Groups of Shops'? It would certainly save confusion. Anyway, I digress, and seem to have backed myself into a corner from which escape is almost impossible. It's time to write an editor's comment. Here goes... (Get on with it - Ed.))

Thanks. Life isn't easy anymore - in fact for some, like Joe Maroni and his mate Nat (the rat) Gonzales, it's very hard indeed. You may think it's bad when your parents banish you to your bedroom for committing some heinous crime like calling your granny 'moustache face' but at least you've got a bedroom to go to.

Joe (pre '!') and Nat don't have such luxuries for they are, as they say, abode-less. For them, home is where the cardboard box is but they're as happy as can be, mainly because of the larks and japes the duo constantly get up to. Tagging (which is 'street' for spraying your personalised sign on public property) has become a way of life. Unfortunately, it may also spell the end.

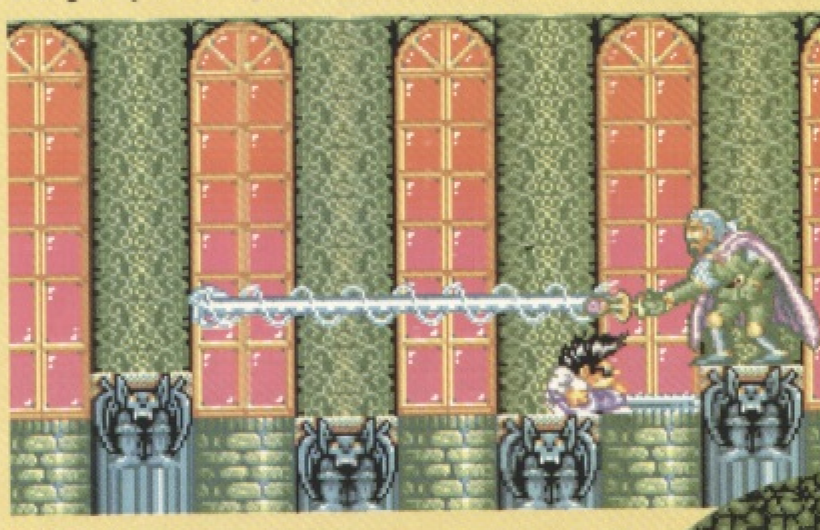
Okay, so I haven't covered the plot very well but the fact of the matter is there isn't one. For some reason, probably associated with tagging, the two young fella-me-lads have managed to rile five end-of-level guardians, resulting in the hapless twosome having to negotiate five levels of sheer hell before life can return to normal.

Unlike the plot, the game is actually brilliant. Here's why...

We know how much you love our specially-assembled, pieced-together maps so here's yet another for your delight. This shows the beginning of Level Three and, as you can see, it's certainly no pushover. Note: For easy reading we've flipped the map horizontally so that you don't have to read from right to left. If you are Arabic then simply hold the magazine upside-down and turn your retinas back-to-front.



Each level has its own theme and the creatures that wander around fit in very nicely. The Haunted House contains all kinds of undead meanies, such as vampires and these skeletons. Joe! has a number of weapons at his disposal, as long as he's collected them along the way, of course, varying from the simple fist (handy for punching people) to the deadly chainsaw (handy for doing the gardening). Each weapon is changed by crouching down and pressing Fire.



The end-of-level guardians are the only thing preventing Joe! from escaping to the next area and with five main ones to defeat you can be sure that all your energy reserves just won't be enough. There's plenty of opportunity to practise, however, as there are usually two or three mid-level guardians to destroy on the way. The petrol bombs usually come in handy here.

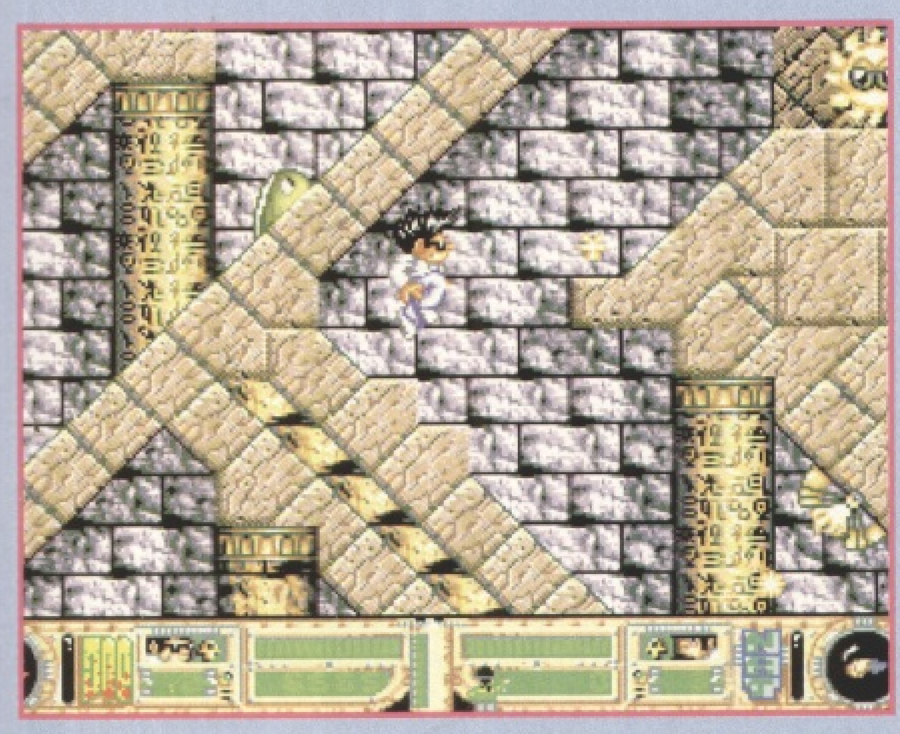
Joe! is an athletic chap, and that's no mistake. He can jump like a frog, swim like a fish and hang from ledges like a Prince of Persia. He can also hold his breath for an un-Maxwell-like amount of time, being able to stay in the water for as long as you care to leave him there. But don't let your attention wander for too long - there are plenty of nasty fish to deplete your energy.

Here's where Joe! starts. Hurry along now....

Ah-ha, a handy weapon power-up. Collecting this will reveal a Nunchaka.

Spikes aren't fatal but they do drain energy at an alarming pace. Best to avoid.

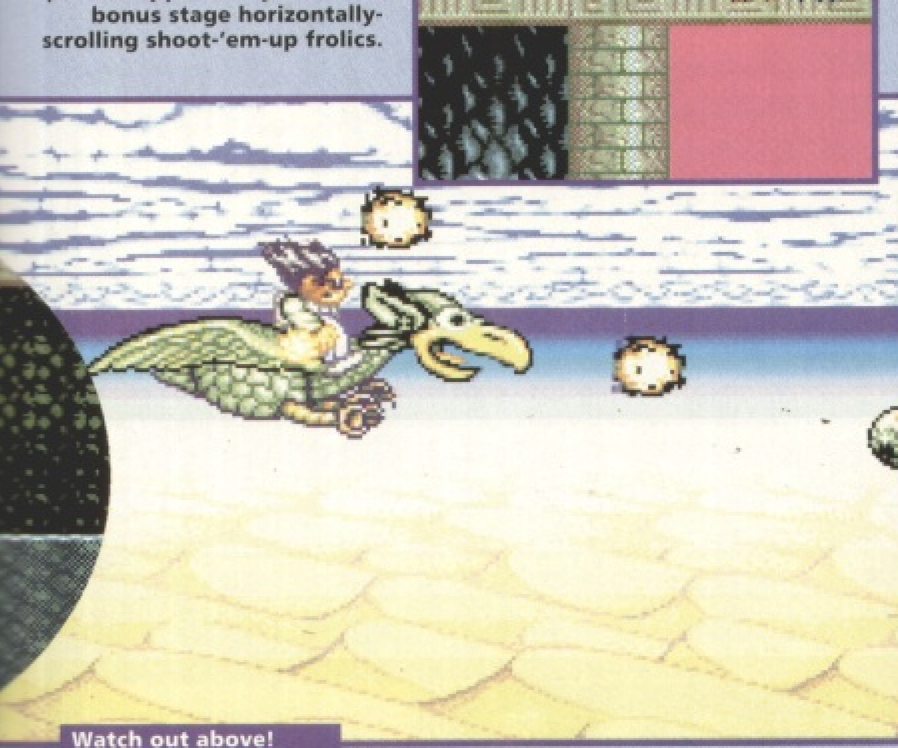
The natives are restless and they're chucking boomerangs. Make like a duck and, er, duck. Damn.



The second stage takes place deep inside a sprawling pyramid, with mummies and freaky blob things to fend off. If you do suffer an almost fatal amount of damage then collecting the yellow crosses (which are either lying around in the open or hiding inside bonus chests) will top up your energy reserves. Failing that, you can always pop into any showers you find, as the water is so invigorating that it'll replenish all your life points.



You can play Yo! Joe! with a mate if you fancy (the screen keeps up with the player in the lead) but don't think that if you're playing on your own you're on your own, if you know what I mean. Once you've completed Level One, you see, you get this mighty dragon to keep you company who will take you to your next destination, giving the perfect opportunity for some bonus stage horizontally-scrolling shoot-'em-up frolics.



Watch out above! You'll often find that blocks shudder and then topple, squashing you instantly if you aren't looking.

They're chucking spears now. Why not wrap a Nunchaka around his head?

THE VERDICT

You obviously don't get the Head and Shoulders ad in Germany. First impressions count, right, so what's Level One of Yo! Joe! like? Dull, that's what. Now, as reviewers, we're affected by the initial five minutes of a game just as much as you are - we try not to be, but it's just one of those things. So when Yo! Joe! was loaded up for the first time, most of us decided that it was okay but not really that impressive. About as much fun as Nicky 2, I reckoned. Well, you do have to play for a while to begin to enjoy Yo! Joe! but after half an hour or so the game really takes hold. I suppose Rick Dangerous is the easiest comparison, but rather than throwing near-fatal obstacles at you with no warning whatsoever (Rick's downfall), Yo! Joe! guides you through the hazards, so that when things really do become tough you've at least got a fighting chance. These set-pieces (like the falling bricks on Level Three or the blades on Level Four) demand to be beaten, which is why Yo! Joe! is so compulsive. The control method does its best to get in the way at first but after a while it soon becomes second nature, with the Price of Persia-type leaps initiated with ease (like they should be). The infinite continues are a real bonus, although passcodes would have helped because if you want to finish the game you'll have to do it in one sitting. Still, it's more of a pleasure than a chore and time spent on Yo! Joe! will be far more enjoyable than playing some of the other games released this month. Yo! Joe! may not have the polish or finesse of Soccer Kid or Flashback but as long as you're prepared to spend some quality time from the start then you'll not be disappointed. Trust me on this.

Publisher: Play Byte
Developer: In-house

£26.99 Out Now

Joystick

MEMORY	DISKS
1Mb	2

GRAPHICS	78%
SOUND	72%
PLAYABILITY	83%
LASTABILITY	82%
OVERALL	84%

A1200 If you've got an A1200 and you like the sound of Yo! Joe! then rush out and snap it up. You'll not find any major differences, but it's still just as groovy nonetheless.

BLOB

Blobby Broughton takes you and his baby blobbetts to a blobby place where words like 'oblivion' and 'dimension' are always just around the corner - universally speaking, of course.

Imagine another universe that is altogether a different dimension existing on the edge of our reality - a place of dreams and illusions. This is the universe of Blob. A dimension of height, a dimension of ground, of gravity and time. Here life is but a bounce away from oblivion. Live life on the edge - experience Blob.

As you may have realised, the above paragraph was penned by the game's makers in a desperate attempt to give a basic game an interesting and exciting air of mystery. Which probably explains why it's such a complete load of bloblocks. Never mind.

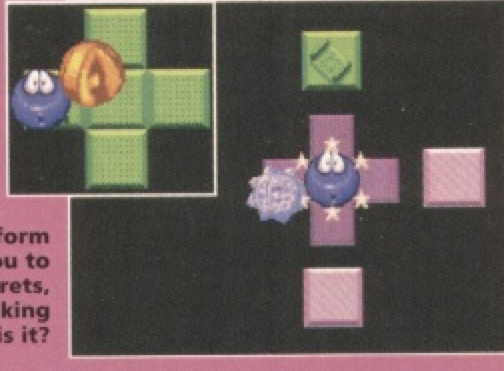
Onto the plot. Blob's spacecraft has broken down while transporting a cargo load of baby blobetts and, as is always the case, parts of the ship have been lost and some of the blobbets have wandered off as well. Blob has a set time limit in which to search the fifty levels and find all the missing spaceship parts and round up the remaining blobbetts still lost or trapped.

It's hard to guess exactly where he must have broken down as the place seems to be made up of a number of tiles floating at different levels in space. Thus Blob must use his bouncing abilities to get between the levels using any of the special tiles with advantageous properties he happens to come across.

You'll need precision positioning all the way as slipping off the edge will send you tumbling into infinity, while jumping into the tiles above you may give you a nasty bump on the head not to mention deflecting you off in the wrong direction towards - yes, you've guessed it - infinity again!

Blob's a characteristic little devil and we've not seen many games that look like this so what's the score on the door? This way for the Verdict please ladies and gentlemen.

Levels aren't always completed in the same way. Some may rely on a number of switches being activated while others may have a set number of items to collect before you move to the next level. In some levels the exit appears as a red tile indicating that you need to rescue a number of litle Blobbets (inset). Mind you, you'll need to think about how to get them back to the exit as they can't fall as far as you.



The aliens vary in both appearance and style of attack. The more common baddies are there to simply get in your way and push you off a specific tile, while others can move freely up and down causing damage each time they hit you. As well as mobile aliens, bad news comes in the form of fans pushing or pulling you to your doom as well as gun turrets, spinners and slicers. Not looking too good for Blob really, is it?

(Right) The key to success lies in recognising all the different tiles that appear throughout the game. Cracked tiles can only be used a few times before they crumble away while arrows show you the way to go home when levels are too far below to see. Tiles can also show icons that will slow you down or speed you up with some holding collectibles that must be, er, collected before the level can be completed. The colour of the tiles also defines how you bounce on each particular one.

THE VERDICT

Blob is a very nice and fairly original idea that is unfortunately let down by being too unforgiving to the average games player. It becomes extremely frustrating when you find yourself falling helplessly off the screen for the hundredth time just because you were slightly out with your timing on a simple jump. The passwords appear frequently, but even so some of the levels (including some of the fairly early ones) treat you so badly when it comes to penalising your minor mistakes that the game eventually just becomes an annoying struggle. The Blob character is a brilliant little fella who deserves much more than this, but his control is so sluggish and tiresome that you really lose the will to persevere with him after about an hour - Dave only watched me playing for about twenty minutes and now the man's nearly bald. Some of the sound effects are quite well done and the 3D technique used is quite nice, but at the end of the day I have to keep coming back to the fact that the frustrating regularity of unfair death hisses you off so much that it's hard to stay friends with the game for very long. I played this over a number of days and each time I returned to it I felt that I had been a bit unfair in my judgement, but after half an hour of being pushed off tiles and bumping into platforms above me I still came to the same overall conclusion. If you have the patience of a saint and aren't the sort of person that's likely to throw your Amiga through the window when frustration takes over then take a look. As for me, I'm off to take my aggression out on a brick wall.

Publisher: Core Design
Developer: In-house
£25.99 Out Now
Joystick
MEMORY 1Mb
DISKS 1

GRAPHICS	78%
SOUND	74%
PLAYABILITY	58%
LASTABILITY	77%
OVERALL	67%



A1200 This moves very nicely on the A1200 but I think, if I'm not mistaken (and I don't think I am) you'll find it does just about exactly the same on the standard. Another wasted opportunity, if I'm not mistaken. Yes. Yes.

ADVERTISERS INDEX

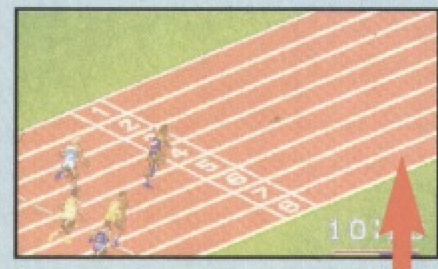
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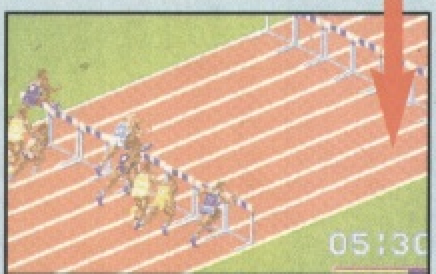
SUPER SPORT

Michael Jackson may have been Bad, but certainly not as rubbish as Microids' supposed sports game. Simon Byron dishes the dirt.

Occasionally, when an unbelievable game comes along, we here at The One like to begin the review or Verdict with a made-up word (Dave's 'Glumph!' which kicked-off Superfrog is a memorable example), mainly because we can't think of decent adjectives. I suppose that Super Sport Challenge would qualify for such a 'word', but the type which would accurately describe Microids' latest Amiga offering wouldn't pass Dave's rigorous and family-friendly subbing. He won't even let me use the word (snip! - Ed.), you know.

If you haven't gathered, Super Sport Challenge is the kind of game which was so popular back in the early 80s when Track & Field ruled the arcades, only with a slight twist - there's no joystick waggling here. But what you will find if you're foolish enough to spend £26 on this sad excuse for a game is a pile - and prepare yourself for a swear word here - of crap. Here's why...

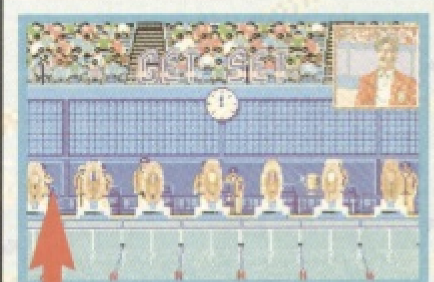




Ah, the sprints to end them all - between ten and thirteen seconds of pure adrenalin, unless you're playing SSC. The controls for these races couldn't be easier to remember. Just press Fire to sprint off (wait for the gun, though!), then work out how much of your player's total energy you want use up as you race for the finish. Pushing 'right' speeds up gradually, Fire will cause your runner to accelerate in 'bursts', whilst pushing 'up' will make your athlete jump - if you're competing in the hurdles, that is. The easiest way to win these races is to hold right for about four or five seconds and then press Fire. Exciting, eh?

The pole vault's dumbest feature is the rapidly-changing viewpoint. You begin by looking over the athlete's shoulder but once the pole has been firmly embedded in the correct position, a side-on view appears, making the already awkward controls even harder to grasp. The same can't be said about the high jump, though, as the screen scrolls into position, but leaping the bar is incredibly tough and certainly a skill which isn't worth learning.



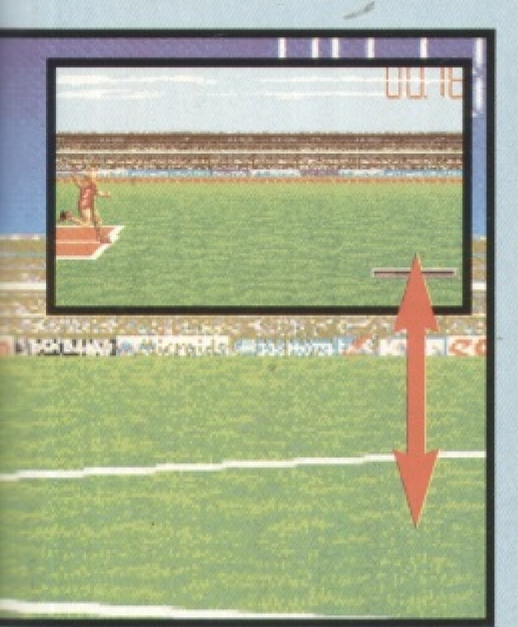


Guess what you have to do in the swimming events (100m and the 4x100m relay)? That's right, conserve or burn your energy by moving left or right as your player journeys from end to end and press Fire to breathe. The brilliant thing about this and all the other racing events is that when two players are racing the the screen keeps up with the one going the fastest, meaning that your opponent has little chance to catch up if he makes a mistake. It may be funny (well, it made us laugh) but it sure ain't competitive.





CHALLENGE



(Above) The two throwing events require very little joystick manipulation, and so are very little fun. The javelin is basically the 100m sprint with an additional Fire at the end (like, wow) and 'putting the shot' requires two taps of the Fire separated only by pushing 'up' for a bit. Now I remember when these games required genuine skill and not patience and trying to stay awake. Those were the days...

The long and triple jump events begin like all the rest but you have to decide at what rate you want your athlete to accelerate by moving right whenever you like (really?). Then, when the springboard is in sight, press Fire. There's absolutely no difference between the control methods for both jumps, so the triple jump becomes very much a spectator sport after you've reached the line. You'd have more fun watching a PD animation or something.

THE REAL GAMES

You may not notice them at first, but there are several sub-games hidden deep inside Super Sport Challenge which are actually great fun to play, and certainly more enjoyable than the main game itself. Here's just a few of them...

INPUT THE CORRECT CODE



It's a pity that this is the first sub-game you meet as it's all downhill from here. The computer will give you a flag and a number and by referring to the manual you have to work out which digit completes the code. The only problem is that if you get it right first time then you have to reboot to play again. The cost of fun is high in Super Sport Challenge.

GUESS THE EVENT



In between events you'll be presented with this not-high-resolution sepia graphic which is supposed to depict what you'll be doing next. Some screens are disguised so badly, though, that it's often more amusing to make up events to fit. Like this 100m Growing A Beard sprint.

INSERTING THE CORRECT DISK

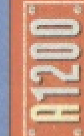


This is marvellous fun. Sometimes, to keep you awake and on your toes, the computer will request another disk - a kind of puzzle, if you like - and by matching the number shown on the screen to the one printed on the disk you can proceed with the 'action'. Move over, my go next...

THE VERDICT

I never thought I'd find myself cursing a lack of joystick waggling in a sporty game, but Super Sport Challenge's 'unique' system of energy conservation and similarly lame and ill-thought-out 'strategic' elements really do leave much to be desired. In fact, I'd say that one disk's worth of Dragon's Lair 2 has twice as much playability than all of the events found here put together. Where's the excitement in winning the 100m by holding the joystick to the right and pressing Fire when you can be bothered? Probably in the same place as the enjoyment you get from playing. I'd imagine that most of Super Sport Challenge's interesting design features were dreamt up in a pub and sounded quite good when the designers were a few sheets to the wind. "Weird perspectives which keep changing just as you get used to them... Controls which read like the Space Ace solution... Excellent two-player mode, where if one player falls behind the other then only one remains in view... Another pint of lager, please." Actually, that's wrong - I've credited the creators with enough intelligence to walk into a pub unaided. The blokes behind this effort must be so devoid of common sense that they need to ask their parents to tie up their shoelaces. If any of you out there - and that includes those who rushed out and bought WWF and Terminator 2 - even consider spending your cash on this abysmal waste of time then you deserve no sympathy at all. Don't come crying to us.





You shouldn't really be interested in this little box because there's no point in wondering whether or not this will work on the A1200 (it does, but there are a few graphical glitches). Just don't buy it.

INTERNATIONAL OPEN GOLF CHALLENGE

Green issues are an integral part of 90s society, especially for A1200 owners now that Ocean have released their first golf game. Simon Byron reports on the environment.

A few months ago we had the great idea of setting up a golfing competition between some showbiz golfers and us here at The One. The idea was to play nine holes of real golf and nine holes of computer golf against a certain well-known entertainer and his celebrity chum, the winner being the player who went round our fictitious course in the least amount of strokes.

I was given the task of setting this up so I duly got hold of the star's agent and began explaining exactly what we were after. "No problem," came the reply, "It will only cost you £15,000."

As you can probably guess, there was no way we were going to pay out kind of money - after all, it would virtually wipe out Dave's food allowance for the month - so the idea was put on hold until we can find a down-and-out entertainer who'll do anything for a half of lager and free publicity.

The reason I'm relaying this story to you is that Ocean's first attempt at a golf game comes with no major sportsman or celeb endorsing it - and certainly not our greedy showbiz 'mate'. Nope, it's none other than Pringle, purveyors of fine yellow sweaters, who have lent their name to International Open Golf Championship.

The manual comes complete with the story of Pringle's unquestionable success and details loads of facts which are bound to impress your mates when you've run out of happy things to say to each other (like, did you know that Pringle was founded by a Robert Pringle?). And if that's not reason enough to purchase International Open Golf Challenge then I don't know what is.



There are all kinds of wild 'n' wacky golf variations to choose from, many of which must sound a little pervy to golfing virgins. If you fancy indulging in such pleasurable delights as Foursomes, Strokeplays and Fourballs then this is the place for you. Up to four players can participate in each round but you can't play against the computer so be prepared for long and lonely treks around the course if you haven't got any friends.



Nick Faldo's Golf may have had a couple of pull-out menus for your delectation but International Open Golf Challenge (I'm getting a bit fed up with typing that all the bloody time, I can tell you - I'll start abbreviating soon) has quite literally more of them, all of which contain handy options such as club selection, special map views and so on. An option to significantly reduce the detail level and speed up the game would have come in handy, although why A1200 owners should need to is beyond me.

Ball

Oh deary me. IOCG (I told you I'd do it) professes to having six different camera shots which are supposed to give the impression that you are travelling close to the ball as it flies through the air, the view gloriously panning around the projectile in wonderful cinematic style. What you actually get is a few static screenshots with a tiny group of pixels moving in jerky fits and starts. Its almost like not being there at all.



Ocean reckon that IOGC's method of whacking the ball is the most realistic yet, and I'd have to agree - I pulled a muscle when teeing off. Okay, so it's not that realistic but it is novel and allows most players to feel they're initially competent without making it too easy. Simply press the mouse when the cross-hair corresponds to where you want to strike the ball (chips, punches, hooks and slices can be performed by varying this position) and away you go.



The amount of power applied to the ball has to be selected from one of the four icons at the bottom of the screen. Okay, so this makes the process of hitting the ball far less complicated but because you can only select from quarter-, half-, three-quarter- and full-power, there's not a lot of scope for small variations. You can slightly alter the distance travels by applying chips and punches, but who needs the hassle when a simple power bar would have been much easier?



Once on the green you can pull out your putter and begin to concentrate on sinking the ball. A good or bad feature (depending on whatever way you look at it) is the Gimme option which occurs whenever a player leaves the ball teetering over the edge of the hole. Rather than having to actually use a bit of skill to finish the hole (God forbid!), you can opt to take it as read that you're talented enough to pull off the shot and not bother with physically proving it.

With the A1200's possible palette of 16.8 million colours there are endless opportunities for producing a glorious-looking golf games with subtle colour shading and smooth terrains which wouldn't look out of place on a post-card of some popular tourist attraction in Southern France. Not so, say the programmers of IOGC, the best you can come up with is dubious texture mapping and dull colours giving the impression that you're playing golf on a smog-tarnished roundabout in the middle of a sprawling metropolis on an overcast day.

THE VERDICT

A1200

In a genre dominated by three top-class golfing games (namely MicroProse Golf, PGA Tour Golf and Nick Faldo's, er, Golf) it comes as a surprise to find such a supremely average sim appearing from one of the most prolific publishers of Amiga games. If you're only interested in putting balls by selecting an appropriate club and tapping the mouse button at the correct moment in time then you'll find that International Golf enables this with relative ease. The control method is unusual but not a problem to get to grips with and the range of shots is exactly what you'd expect from a computer sim. But all the better golfing games have excelled in particular areas (superb fly-by views, snazzy graphics, smooth gameplay, etc) whereas Ocean's game has nothing extra going for it. But that's not to say that it doesn't try. There's a wealth of options presented in a fairly user-friendly style, but the options which most people will be interested in - the fly-by and camera views - amount to nothing more than slideshows consisting of several unrelated static screens shown in what seems to be a random order. When you consider the relative speed that MicroProse Golf managed its sweeping camera shots (and remember that was without the high-processing power of the A1200), International Golf comes across as an extremely lazy effort. If you're into computer golfing with absolutely no useful bells or whistles then International Golf is for you but if, like me, you've come to expect more from a golfing game than a simple reactions test then I'd advise you to look elsewhere.

No plans for an A500/600 version, I'm afraid, so you'll have to upgrade if you're really that interested.

Publisher: Ocean
Developer: RISC

£? Out Now

Mouse

MEMORY	DISKS
2Mb	4

GRAPHICS	51%
SOUND	47%
PLAYABILITY	50%
LASTABILITY	52%
OVERALL	51%

Jocky Wilson's COMPENDIUM of Darts

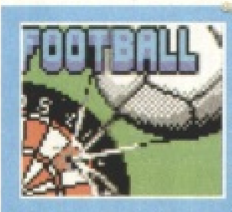
Way-aye pet! Will Zeppelin's beer-drinking and tabs-smoking darts star please step up to the oche. Simon Byron's waiting for you.

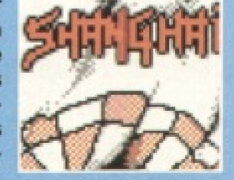
I've often wandered why people choose tennis as a sport. Take Wimbledon, for example. You run around for three or four hours (although, in these days of equal sexes, it's less if you're a girl) in the blazing heat, swiping at a ball travelling billions of miles an hour and grunting for all you're worth, just to win a few quid.

But why bother with all that when you can play darts? Just stand around for a bit, drinking copious amounts of lager, smoking as many cigarettes as your lungs can handle, getting fat and occasionally chucking three light pointy-things at a circular board. The only moderately exhausting thing you ever need to do is get in and out of your comfy chair.

But then why bother with all that when you can play computer darts? You don't even need to leave your home or chair. And the beer's cheaper if you purchase it from an off-licence.

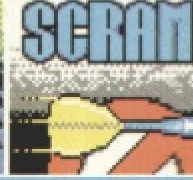
So what are you waiting for?

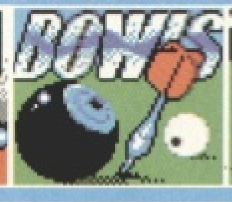


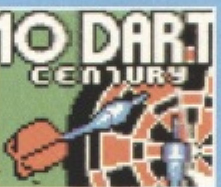


You can select from a number of dart-ish games if you feel like a different challenge. The only game which is moderately interesting is Ten Dart Century where two players have to score as near to 100 as possible using ten darts. The others (like Football, Dart Bowls, Scram and Shanghai) are still fairly playable but basically boil down to the same game at the end of the day.









Accurately hitting the best number (which the computer will suggest for the sake of the mathematically inept) is made tricky because of the wobbly cursor which simulates the effect of fourteen pints of 'amber nectar'. Just manoeuvre the dart until it is roughly over the number you want to hit and press Fire. If only it was as easy as it sounds.



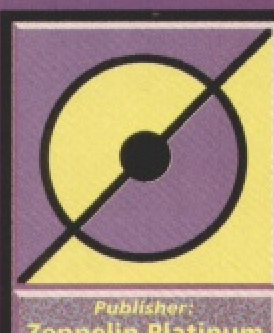


THE VERDICT

Hmm, not too sure about this one. Most of the darts games I've had the fortune (ahem) to come across have been okay-ish, but Jocky Wilson's Compendium Darts is just below par (wrong game, I know) in about every area. The most important of these is the movement of the darts themselves. Now I know that every darts game and his wife employ the wobbly hand system but this one changes directions so rapidly that it's near impossible to improve your skills without relying on luck for at least 50% of the time. Obviously there's very little you can do to make a darts game look visually exciting and that's what Zeppelin have done - very little. The few animations which are in the game are the computer equivalents of drawing two slightly different images on two sheets of paper and flicking between them, and the darts themselves tend to blend into the board - although this doesn't make any difference to the game as you can't strike another dart or hit the metal bits between the numbers (whatever they're called), which is kind of missed. The compendium element doesn't really work that well - the ideas are nice but poorly implemented and some of the rules (like hitting the bulls-eye to start) are just too hard. When all's said and done, Jocky Wilson's not too offensive but there's nothing which stands out shouting "Buy me".



If there was a superb 3D shot of the dart travelling to its target then I'm sure it would move at a blinding pace. But there isn't.

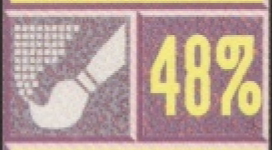


Publisher: Zeppelin Platinum
Developer: In-house

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Joystick

MEMORY 512k | DISKS 1

GRAPHICS

48%

SOUND

44%

PLAYABILITY

52%

LASTABILITY

49%

OVERALL 49%

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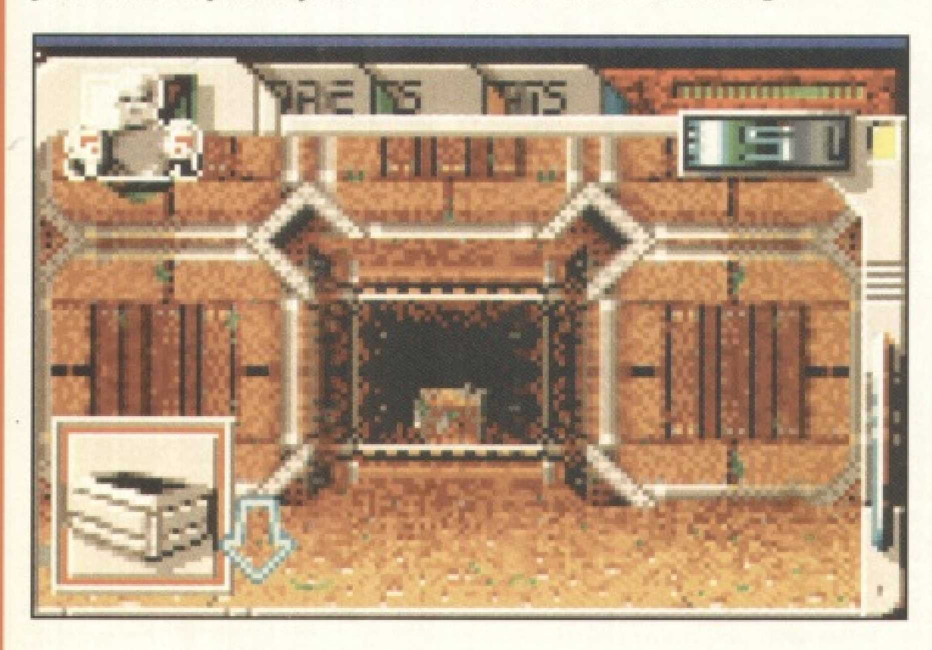
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(Below) To add items to a character's inventory, simply move the cursor over the box which appears in the corner of the display and press the right mouse button. Calling up the list of stuff that you own will inform you of the nature of your acquired goodies. Each player has a set limit of the amount they can carry, so decide carefully which items you want to take with you and which you'll reject.



DMA Design has an almost Crackerjack-like effect on most Amiga owners. Whenever you mention the Scottish design team you'll no doubt hear the reply "Lemmings," which is a little unfair when you consider the other great games they've written. Walker was particularly excellent, as was... oh dear. Lemmings.

Well here's another one to add to DMA's track record. Hired Guns is, and I'll get this out of the way now, an RPG. Now, there are many who may be throwing their hats in the air, yelling "Yippee! I've just finished King's Beholder Ultima Legend 12 and was looking for something to keep me occupied for another six months so that I don't have to converse with real people" but others, who prefer blood and guts may well be thinking about skipping the next four pages, hoping to find a review of Project Brilliant or whatever.

If you fit into the latter category then don't. You see, apart from the fact that there aren't any shoot-'em-ups this issue, Hired Guns is the closest we're ever likely to see of a true combination of the two genres.

Rather than being set in days-gone-by when elves, orcs and dorks roamed the countryside, casting spells and nicking kings' daughters, Hired Guns takes place far in the future. Commanding a group of four mercenary-types, you're given the task of destroying a production plant currently pumping out billions of illegal bio-engineered organisms. These mutants are threatening the existence of life itself and if they aren't disposed of within 13 'local days' then there'll be trouble. You know the sort of thing - death, mutilations, etc.

If the scenario, special four-way display and wealth of gore aren't enough to persuade you that Hired Guns really is a different RPG then here's something which should. I like it.

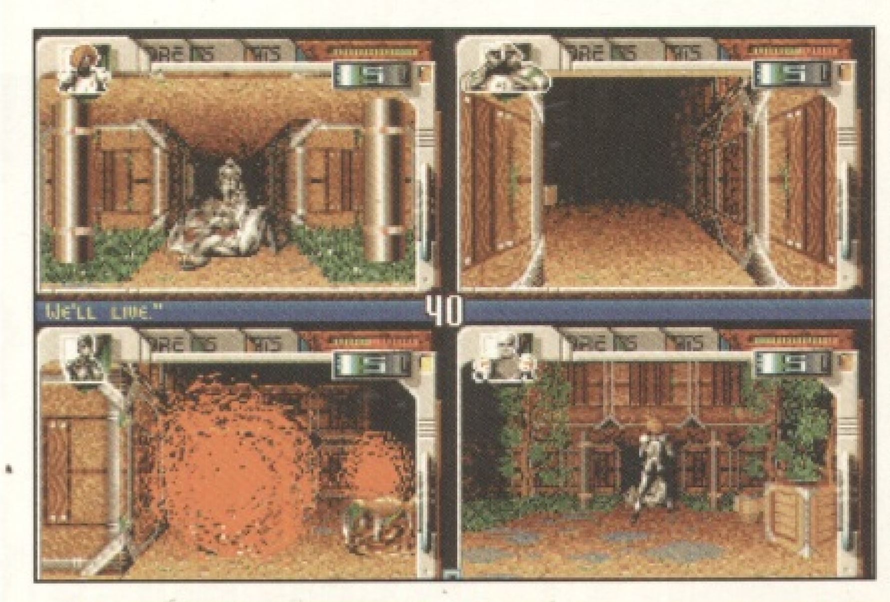
THIS LOOKS A BIT TRICKY

Okay, to the uninitiated Hired Guns may look a bit hard to get into. Wrong - the player interface is very intuitive and easy to get to grips with. You always control four characters (even in one-player mode) and by moving the mouse, joystick or keyboard (the choice is yours) you can instruct them to perform different actions. There are four screens available to each character (selected by clicking on the top of the display) and each has different uses, as shown below.

So you think you're hard, do you? Well let's if you can survive as long as SImon Byron can in Psygnosis's incredible RPG.

HIRED





The grenades are extremely versatile and deadly. You can specify how far you want to chuck them by moving the cursor towards the top of the display (it will change to indicate a circle which can be anything from only slightly filled, which means the grenade won't travel very far, or completely coloured in, meaning that it will explode four 'squares' away). It's best to try and throw them as far as possible as the resulting blast can also harm you or anyone else in your team.



There will come times when you're hopelessly lost. If even the DTS isn't proving too useful then it's best to hunt down one of these extremely helpful signs which indicate the general direction you should be travelling.

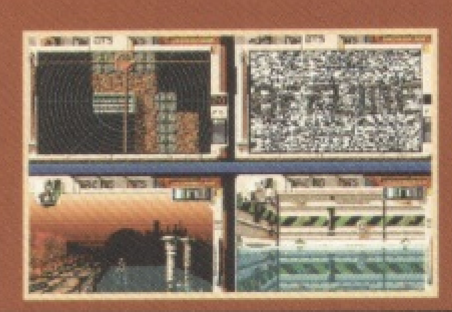
You'll spend most of your time concentrating on this screen. Everything going on in the game world is represented in a Dungeon Master kind of way and by moving the mouse pointer to the edge of the display you can instruct each character to move in any of the standard RPG directions. You can also fire weapons, push blocks and pick up items from this screen.



The inventory contains every item each character is carrying and by placing certain objects in his or her hands you specify exactly what weapon or piece of equipment (from first-aid kits to security passes) will be activated by pressing fire on the main screen. You can also drop items from here (as long as there's room where you're standing) for other characters to pick up.



Most of your team carry a Digital Terrain Scanner (DTS) which automaps each level as you discover new areas. The display shows most of the surrounding territory but doesn't indicate where any of the monsters are so you need to be constantly on your toes if you wish to avoid the troublesome nasties.



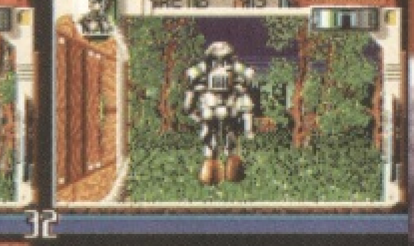
If you're in any doubt as to the state of a particular player then calling up the stats should see you right. Here you can see how fit a character is (0% means not very), find out how big and strong someone is and also see how experienced each mercenary has become. Only call up this screen in a quiet moment as the 3D action continues whether you're concentrating on it or not.



GUNS

(Above) These forcefields are curious things and that's no mistake. Most of the time they'll just glow menacingly at you doing nothing other than preventing you from going in a particular direction. Some will allow certain team members to pass through while others can be switched off, enabling anyone to walk on through. Feel free to experiment as none will deduct life points from you if you attempt to walk into one.

Before you start exploring a new level it's best to equip each character with a suitable weapon. Everyone starts with one or two guns and a limited supply of ammo and, once you've selected which to use, pressing the mouse button when the cursor depicts a cross-hair will release a wave of bullets or grenades in the direction you're facing. Don't shoot willy-nilly, though, as bullets can also harm the other team members.



(Below) Before you can start kicking ass you need to select a super-hard party of four with which to do it. Each potential team member has different abilities, the most important of which being how receptive they are bullets in the brain. The candidates are a right mixture in terms of nationality and age - some ranging from a youthful mid-thirties to well over a hundred. There's no room for grandads on this trip.





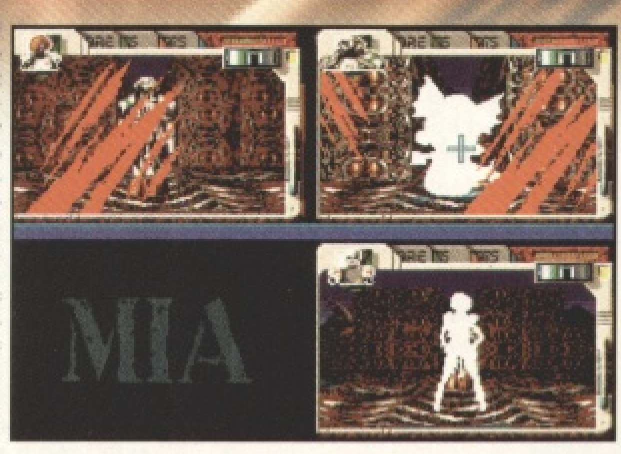


(Above) Hired Guns can be played by either one, two, three or four players, with the team divided as equally as possible between each. You might think that moving four people around on your own would be a time-consuming process but if you nominate a captain and decide who should obey his orders you can instruct other characters to play follow-my-leader. This method is ideal for splitting the team in two, with a couple of mercenaries standing on guard while the rest of the party scout about.





Of all the available weapons the sentries are the most lethal. Just plonk them on a free space of land and after ten seconds they'll shoot anything which wanders into their sights. The most powerful sentries will also swivel, ensuring that every line of fire is covered. Unfortunately, though, they'll not hesitate to dispatch a wave of bullets your way so if one is blocking your path then it's best to chuck a few grenades in its direction.



It's not unusual to find every member of the party under attack but Hired Guns makes protecting the group easy indeed. Just move the cursor from window to window, pressing fire when needs be and within a few moments you should find the threat eliminated (if you're lucky). If your weapons do run out of ammo then clicking the right mouse button will reload your gun.



Death comes to us all eventually but if you're a character in Hired Guns then you'd better make sure your life insurance premiums are all paid up. Whenever one of your team sustains too much damage the display changes to inform you of their sad demise and that person plays no further part in the game. Any useful items they may have been carrying are left on the ground where they fell, just waiting to be collected by another team member.



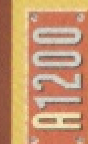
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LOG ENTRY 7. Abandoned Depot.
ESTIMATED THREAT : 1
*** AREA HAS NOT BEEN COMPROMISED ***

Hired Guns allows you to play either training missions, quick action games or a full-blown campaign, the plot of which was outlined earlier. If you are attempting to destroy the engineering complex then you need to complete a series of bite-sized levels by clearing certain sectors of the world map. You can choose which route you wish to take from the campaign map as long as you move from a successfully completed territory to a neighbouring one.

THE VERDICT

If there's one game which is likely to alter the perception of RPGs then Hired Guns is it. If you usually shy away from adventuring then you need only spend a couple of minutes with DMA's RPG to see that this is something truly excellent. The gameplay is so beautifully crafted that even if you'd rather perform a slurpy kiss on an electric plug socket than play adventures you're still likely to love Hired Guns. Sure, there are plenty of puzzles to get your teeth into but rather than interspersing problem solving with a couple of fights here and there, it's completely the opposite - in fact the body-count in Hired Guns is probably only rivalled by Syndicate. The atmosphere generated by the various missions is second to none. I jumped roughly three times during Jurassic Park (that gives you an idea of how hard I am) but some of the traps and creatures Hired Guns requires you to negotiate or outwit are so nerve-wrecking that the game should carry a certification or come complete with incontinence pants. However, if I said the game was huge then I'd be lying. It's about fifty huges, so you'll certainly never moan about VFM. What you may moan about, though, is the difficulty level. Yes, it is a bit too tough in places, which may put a few people off, but if you like a challenge then Hired Guns definitely delivers. Presentation-wise you cannot fault it - indeed, this may well be the slickest game every to have appeared on the Amiga. Hired Guns is truly an RPG for the masses and if you've ever had any reservations about purchasing this type of game then banish them right away. Take it from ever-trustworthy me, no-one, and I'll repeat that, no-one will be disappointed by Hired Guns.





The game recommends that you have 2Mb of RAM to run Hired Guns and sample its atmospheric sound effects in all their glory. A500/600 owners aren't short-changed in any way but if you've got an A1200 then you'll be treated to a few extra sounds here and there.



UPDATES

The One's resident pinball wizard Simon Byron steps boldly into the future with this, the first CD32 entry into our Updates section.

PINBALL FANTASIES

CD32 version; 21st Century Entertainment £TBA.

You may not know this, but we share an office with a magazine called PC Review. They're a bunch of sad individuals who patter about the place day in, day out installing RPGs onto their hard-drives and trying to remain enthusiastic about soundcards and 'VGA', whatever that is.

It's very rare to find them playing a game requiring more than a couple of mouse clicks a minute so when an arcade game comes in (like Zool, for example, which has only recently been converted, would you believe?) they slip into a state of confusion and have to look up 'reactions' in the dictionary to find out what they are and how to use them.



The current piece of software undergoing their rigorous playtesting is Pinball Dreams, the prequel to the game which has just arrived for the CD32. During conversion to the PC, Pinball Dreams has lost a lot of its original Amiga charm - the scrolling is so slow it may as well be flick screen and to speed the game up on an average PC you have to turn off the 'sound', which doesn't amount to much more than a couple of beeps here and there anyway. Great.

We're always ridiculing them about how the Amiga is much, much better than their complicated and tedious machines. It's just friendly rivalry but occasionally trump cards are played which add a new dimension to the conflict. Their Day of the Tentacle is one such game - we found it hard to argue about how Amiga adventures are superior to theirs after LucasArts's latest and greatest. Up until recently it seemed as if we'd lost the war.

Then the reserves were called in and our new super-destructive weapon was finally unveiled - the CD32. And by a strange and curious twist of fate, Pinball Fantasies was also drafted in. Much jeering and abuse ensued as a PC and the CD32 were sat next to each other and both pinball games were loaded up. Both sets of journalists stood side-by-side, poking each other in the ribs until Boom! The One 1 - PC Review Crying.

Now most of us know how brilliant the A500/600 version of Pinball Fantasies was but new Amiga owners may be a tad confused as to why it's such an impressive game. Basically, it's smoothest pinball simulation ever seen on the Amiga with a ball which moves so realistically it looks as if it's in danger of smashing through the screen.

The game scored impressively at the tail-end of last year and, whilst there aren't any major improvements other than a few aesthetic differences and CD sound (a couple of brilliant tunes, one very Richard Clayderman-ish, which have been created in a proper recording studio and everything), it's even better than the 16-bit incarnation. Somehow.

All four tables have been handcrafted in glorious 256 colours which give them a far more realistic look. The ball can still be occasionally lost amongst the flashing lights and bonus switches but the instances of this occurring happen only about as often as you'd get with the real thing.

There are a few subtle gameplay differences which aren't immediately apparent but it's safe to say that the CD32 version just 'feels' slightly better which may have something to do with the joypad. Initially you're left wondering why 21st Century didn't use the two buttons on the front of the joypad for both the flippers but after a while you soon forget that you're holding anything in your hands - it's as if you're thwacking the ball by sending brain-signals directly into the Amiga CD32.

21st Century have taken a brave step by making sure that Pinball Fantasies is one of the first CD32 games. It won't grab people while they're browsing through Dixons like, say, Microcosm will do but in-store demos are likely to shift the game by the box-load as people realise that this is probably the closest they'll ever come to actually owning a pinball machine that doesn't guzzle fifty pees at a frightening rate.



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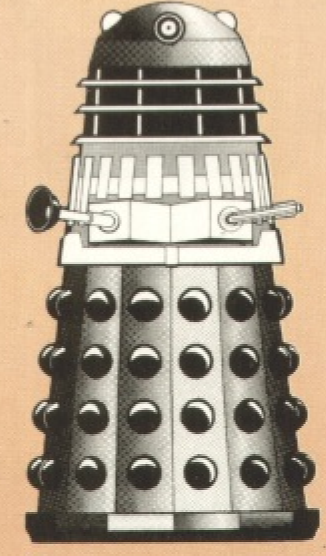
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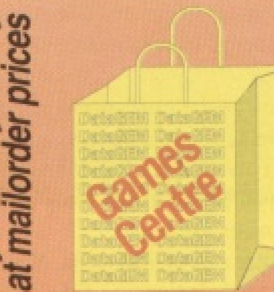


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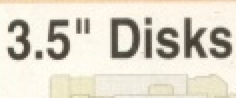
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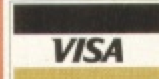
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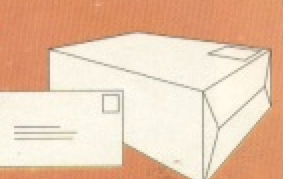
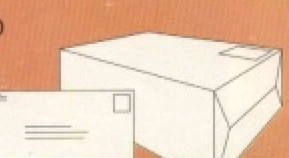






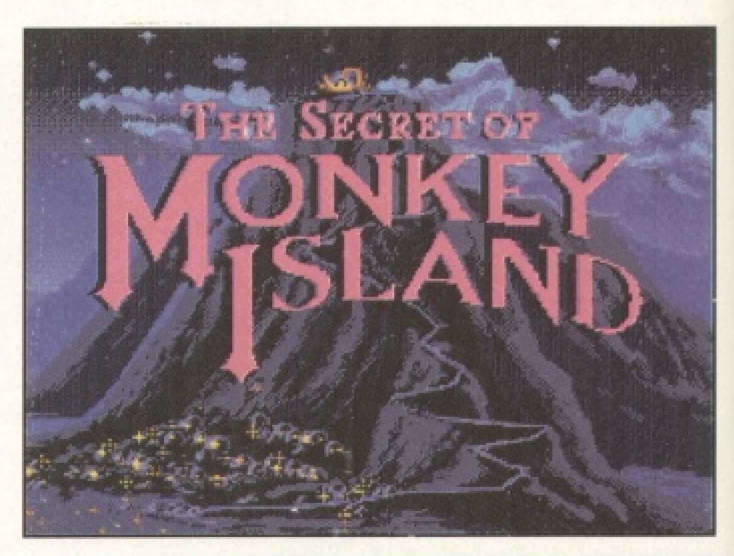
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REPLAYS!

Once again Matt Broughton and Simon Byron dress in similar clothes, share private jokes and generally act like Little and Large as they join forces to present the budget release ridden area of the magazine that has come to be known as.... Replays!



THE SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND

Kixx XL £12.99

What can I say about this? It has to be one of the most popular adventure games in the history of the Amiga. Even now, two years after the game's original release, I still receive literally dozens of letters for the Games Surgery every week asking for help on it, and no doubt it will only get worse as it gets released on budget. Oh great, I just can't wait.

It seems a bit silly to describe the game because I'm sure that even if you don't already own Monkey Island you know about it from some source or other after all these years. When it was first released it twinkled like a bright star, due mainly to the user-friendly 'point and click' interface, quirky graphics, abstract puzzles, dodgy humour and silly characters, and the good news is it stills twinkles today.

As Guybrush Threepwood, you are set the task of becoming a fully-fledged pirate by solving the many and varied tasks and puzzles that are thrown at you along the way. And, believe me, they really are varied - sliding down cables on rubber chickens and swapping gopher repellent for cakes all seem fairly normal things to do once you've been playing this for a while. You never get used to the dreadful jokes though!



You may have picked up objects and used them before, but never like this. You may have had conversations with people, but never as stupid and as pointless as this. Monkey Island offers you the chance to groan and weep as you are teased with horrendously stupid puzzles while being wound up by incredibly frustrating characters that just won't do what you want them to until you've had some silly conversation with them.

Talking to other characters is performed selecting lines of speech from a number of options, thus heading the conversation into specific areas. Object manipulation is simply a matter of clicking onto the required object and giving the correct command (use, give, open, etc.) while wandering around the screen is also just a matter of clicking your mouse.

It all works like a dream and there really is no excuse for not owning this milestone in Amiga history now that it's out on budget - just don't write to me when you can't get the Navigator's head off the cannibals! [MB]











MEAN 18

The Hit Squad £9.99

I've never been one of the people that played golf games in the office at lunchtime mainly because I've never known golf well enough to choose the right club or know which way to shoot into the wind and all that, but all the same I've just enjoyed myself thoroughly thanks to this little Accolade game.

You have the choice of four 18 hole courses: St Andrews, Augusta National, Pebble Beach and a fictitious course called Bush Hill Country Club. You also have the option to load up the 'course architect' program that was used to produce all these courses and design your own or modify those already in existence.

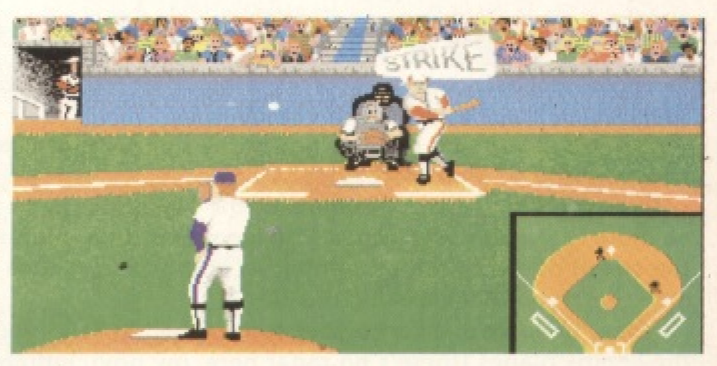
Anyone into these golf games will be familiar with the control system, but just in case you're new to these things I'll give you a quick brief. One of the best features of this version is that the machine automatically picks the best club depending on distance and terrain, so all you have to worry about is giving the shot the best power and direction.

This is done by three clicks on the mouse: the first one sets a slider moving up a percentage bar, the second one stops the slider on the desired power and sends the slider back down towards the 'snap bar', and the third determines whether you hit the ball straight or to the left or right.

Once you get onto the green it's all controlled much the same, although with an overhead view and a line to be moved to indicate the ball direction. Arrows show any undulations in the green and must be compensated for.

And that's it! The graphics and sound are very simple but that really doesn't matter because it's damn good fun, especially if you get a gang of people playing at once. The map editor also increases the fun potential, so if you've ever fancied a go at one of these golf games now's your chance. [MB]

OVERALL 80%



HARDBALL

The Hit Squad £9.99

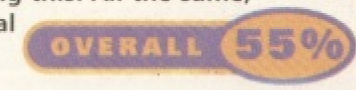
This budget offering follows the standard presentation for games of this type, i.e. close-up view for pitching and batting, moving back to an overall view of the pitch complete with an over-head position map for the fielding.

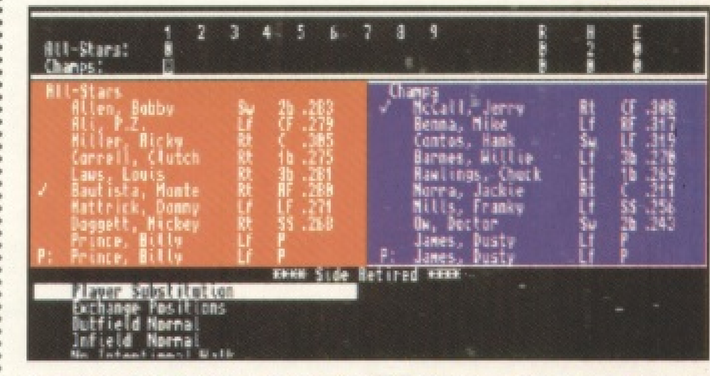
Batting is a simple affair - you just hold the direction of your strike and hitting the fire button to swing. The computer takes control of your running, giving you the chance to steal a further base once you're safe on the first.

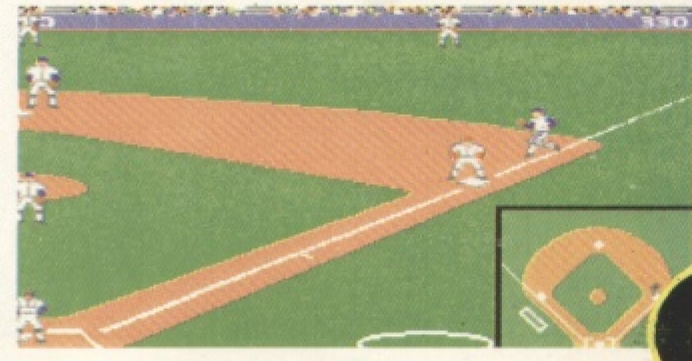
Pitching is a bit more involved with a number of options that need to be preselected before the ball is actually thrown. Choose from fastball, curve-ball, screwball, etc., and then give the throw a general direction. Providing your opponent hits the ball, the view then jumps back to show the overall pitch area and the flight of the ball.

A shadow shows exactly where the ball is and your nearest fielder will flash (I beg your pardon? - Ed.) while he's under your control. If you're able to make the catch, you can then choose which base to throw to by checking the overhead map and judging which runner you are most likely to get out. There are also some general management options which deal with choosing players and organising fielder patterns.

Hardball is fairly entertaining but a bit on the unfair side. When you're batting the ball always seems to go straight to the waiting arms of the computer, but when you're fielding your men seem to be all over the place. The graphics aren't too brilliant but do their job while the sound cheers and plays little tunes now and then. The ball seems to have a gravity all of its own (some times your men are able to run faster than the ball!) and it all plays a little bit too primitively for my liking, but I didn't have too bad a time while reviewing this. All the same, it's still only for the real enthusiasts. [MB]







KNIGHTS OF THE SKY

Kixx XL £12.99

Let's cut the crap and get straight to the point. Knights of the Sky is blummin' brilliant. You want more? Sigh. Here goes...

Basically, the beauty of Knights of the Sky that it deals with the era when planes were no more than bikes with wings. You'll not find super-high-tech war planes travelling at the the speed of light here or combat as complex as 'shoot the dot which appears on the radar with your heat-seeking missiles'.

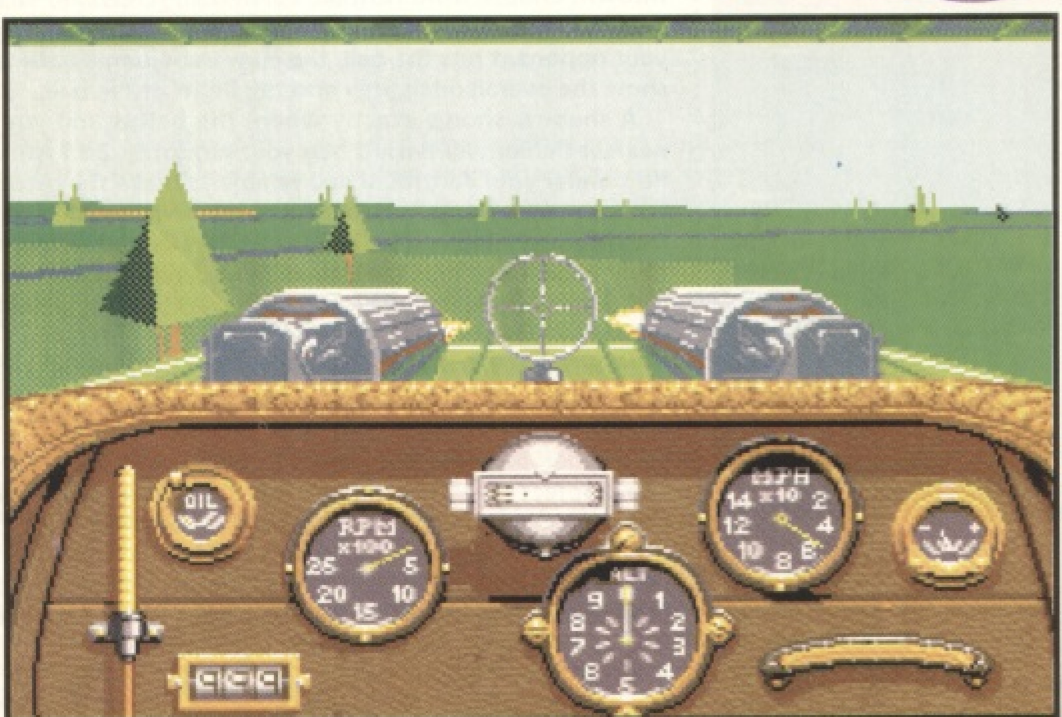
Nope, to notch a kill onto your combat belt in KOTS you have to physically track down the enemy planes (there's no radar here, my boy), indulge in a spot of dogfighting and gradually pick off parts of their aircraft until they can no longer cling to the skies - which is much more fun, if you ask me.

The 3D movement isn't quite as smooth as Combat Air Patrol or as lovely as Gunship 2000 but technicolour buildings and other assorted what-nots aren't really needed - and even if they were included you wouldn't spend that much time admiring them.

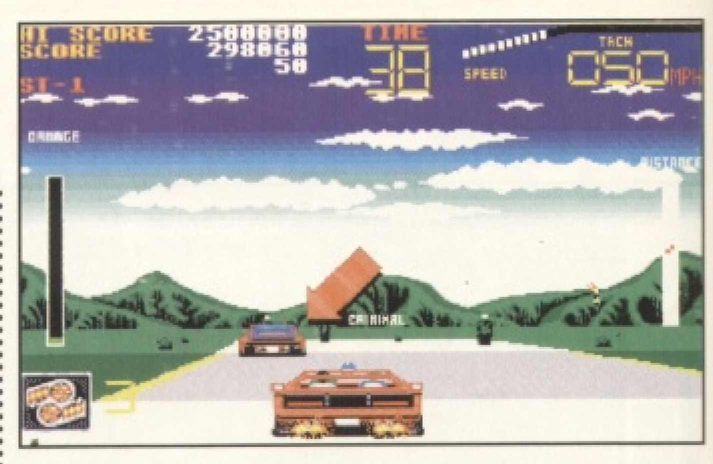
Gameplay-wise it can't be faulted. You can participate in single missions, full-blown campaigns or, best of all, one-on-one dogfights against notorious and feared enemy pilots like the Red Baron. When you know you've got a cocky individual four feet away from you there's a real incentive to finish him off as each kill is noted and added to your overall score.

Up until recently this would get my vote for best Amiga flight sim and the two which possibly surpass it, Combat Air Patrol and Gunship 2000, are completely different games. If you're after a flight sim which is just a little bit different then you've no excuse not to snap this up. Plane games have never been more fun. [SB]











S.C.I. (CHASE H.Q. 2)

The Hit Squad £9.99

As an agent of the Bureau of Special Criminal Investigations you have seen some pretty hairy things in your time (oo-er) but never have you had such an important mission as this. The President's brain is missing. Well actually, the Mayor's daughter has been kidnapped, but I prefer the first saying.

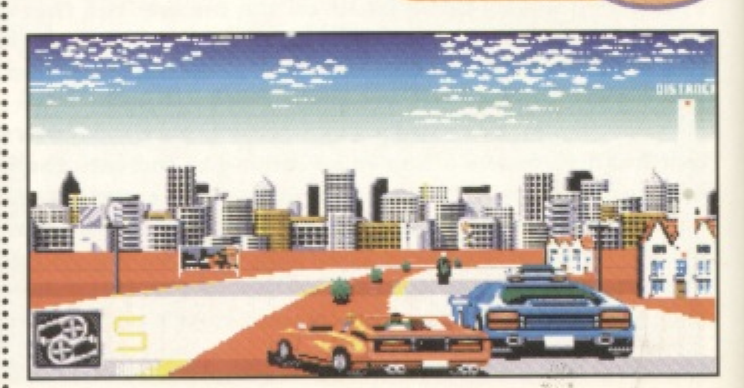
The Mayor's daughter is being held captive in a warehouse somewhere on the southside of town and it's down to you to work your way through six road-racing missions, collecting clues that will eventually lead you to the girl's location. You're under a tight time limit as the only thing she has for company is a time bomb stapled to her legs.

Carrying on from Chase H.Q, this sequel offers more of the same in the guise of a 'behind the car' viewed chase-'n'-shoot game. There are a large number of non-hostile cars and bikes on the road that must be avoided as any collisions will slow you down considerably, wasting precious seconds. Once you've located the enemy car, it's down to you to inflict as much damage on it as possible by ramming or shooting it.

Weapon power-ups are dropped by helicopter every now and then, upgrading your pistol to a hard-core weapon such as a rocket launcher, and a limited number of turbo boosts are available with a tap on the space bar. Do enough damage and the baddy will be forced to pull over, completing the mission -simple.

The graphics are clear and the sound plays its part well. The gameplay is a bit repetitive after a while and I didn't find it particularly thrilling, but you might get £10 worth of fun out of it. [MB]

OVERALL 61%



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68. E.S .Juggler 3 (2 meg) (P)
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70. Hardwired Demo (2) (P)
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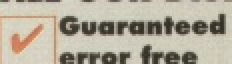
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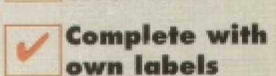
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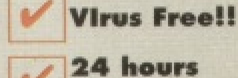
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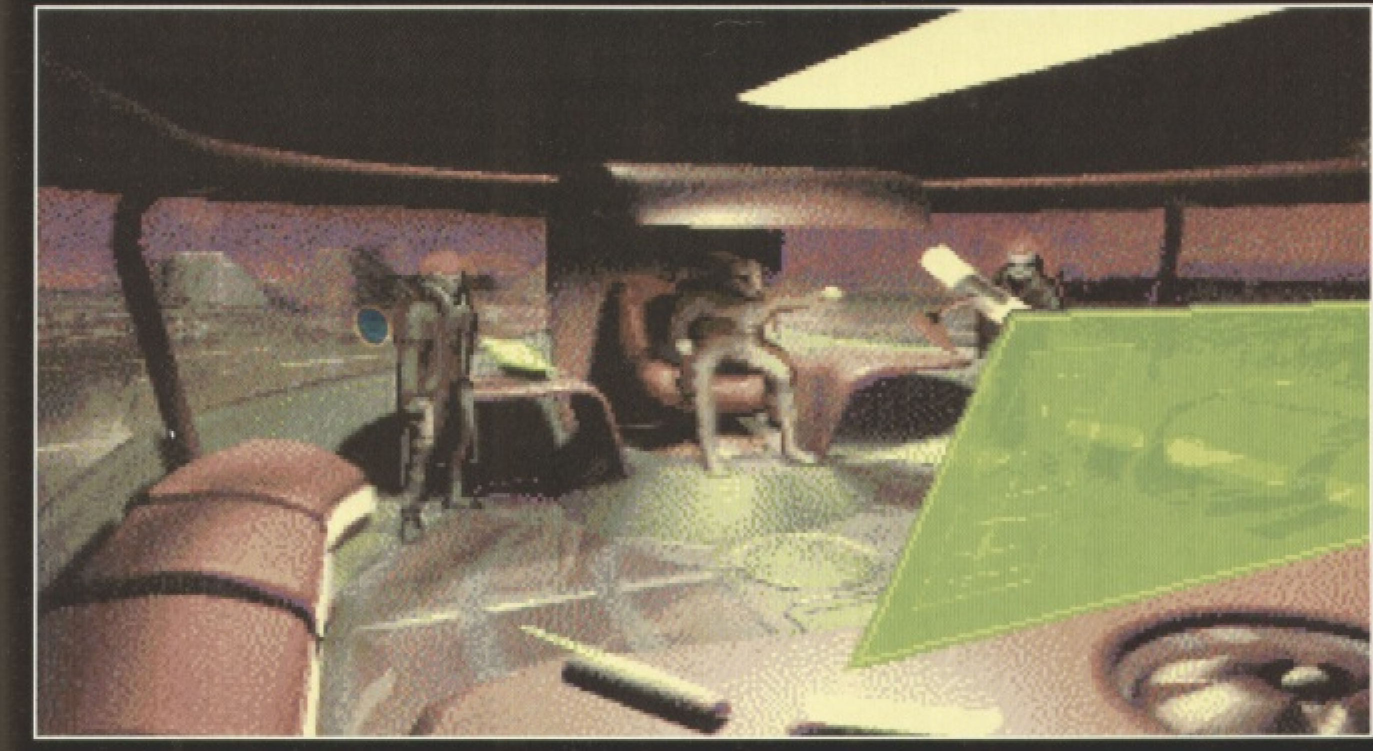
24 hours despatch

Can you smell something strange on the horizon? Yes, once again Kill Zone is striding heroically towards us in a heroic kind of way with a frighteningly useful bunch of grapes tucked under its arm. Get ready to receive our Syndicate player's guide, continuing solutions for Worlds of Legend and Abandoned Places 2 not to mention the start of the Ishar 2 solution. You'll also find War in The Gulf and Transarctica in there somewhere, all rounded off with Snip Tips and a cherry on top. Enjoy.



SYNDICATE

Are you getting mashed by rival business corporations? Having trouble getting your agents' heads together? Unsure which button to press on your Uzi? Then help is at hand from Bullfrog themselves...



BEGINNER'S LUCK

The biggest problem most beginners will have is actually controlling their miniature armies. Trying to guess how each man will react in different situations can also cause some major headaches. One thing to watch out for very carefully is the position you direct your men to. They will always try to get to the exact spot you clicked to on screen, which isn't always the exact spot you want. Remember that you are viewing the cityscape from an airship, which makes it very hard to direct characters to places you can't actually see, such as behind buildings. In cases like these, you'll probably find it a lot easier just to click on the scanner and direct your men that way.

TODDLING

You've got to walk before you can run, so don't be too tempted to bring huge hordes of agents in on the early missions. If you haven't the experience of playing the game you just won't be able to control them. Instead, bring in a single agent and work with him. Stick with one agent for as



long as is safe, giving you time to familiarise yourself with the game mechanics. If you bring in too many, then there's too many openings for you to lose agents as you concentrate on individuals. When you feel up to the challenge start increasing the size of your teams gradually and use the Group mode to make things easier. Get the hang of that and the skies the limit!

YOU'RE BARRED, MATE!

It's also well worth your time getting used to altering the slider bars for each agent. The manual will explain fully what the slider bars are for, in so far as tailoring each agent's performance, and may make it look deceptively simple. Don't be fooled, as the system itself is actually quite tricky.

Each bar has three different levels which can be set: the actual level, the grabber level and the natural level, which are marked as the lighter bar, the darker bar and the white line respectively. The level that you have most control over is the actual level, which affects the agent directly. Moving it higher, to the right of the natural level, raises the amount of fluid in the body, whereas moving it to the left lowers it.

The grabber level represents the body's immune defence system, working against the changes you make. Too much or too little fluid for any period of time can damage the agent's body and this is something that the grabber bar tries to rectify. In short, it slowly moves towards the natural level, dragging the actual level with it, so don't expect any of your more drastic changes to last for any length of time.

One other point to note when shifting levels around is that the body can't put up with radical changes for any length of time. It gets tired and this causes the grabber level to start reacting that little bit faster. In short, you won't be able to have agents racing at full pelt indefinitely, so when you've put an agent through a spell of high activity, find a quiet spot and rest them. If you can, rest them before you put them through any strain too, as this will make them far more resilient to the changes when the time comes to strike the iron.

If you aren't sure how to rest, then here's what you do: Just move the actual level to the left, which will trick the body's defences into giving you longer periods of high fluid.

If you're confused about what the bars actually do, then here's a quick run down. The first bar, the Adrenalin level, acts on the agent's speed. If the adrenalin level is high, the agent will run far faster and if it is low, he will rest. The beauty of resting the adrenalin levels is that it helps wounds repair themselves faster.

Perception levels affect...well, perception really. Basically, the higher the perception levels the more aware an agent is of his surroundings, resulting in more accurate shooting for example - perfect for sniping. Always check the perception levels of an agent before using him for armed combat, as low perception will just result in shots going wide of the mark. However, with an automatic or semi-automatic weapon low perception is exactly what you need for long, wide swings, mowing down crowds of enemy agents.

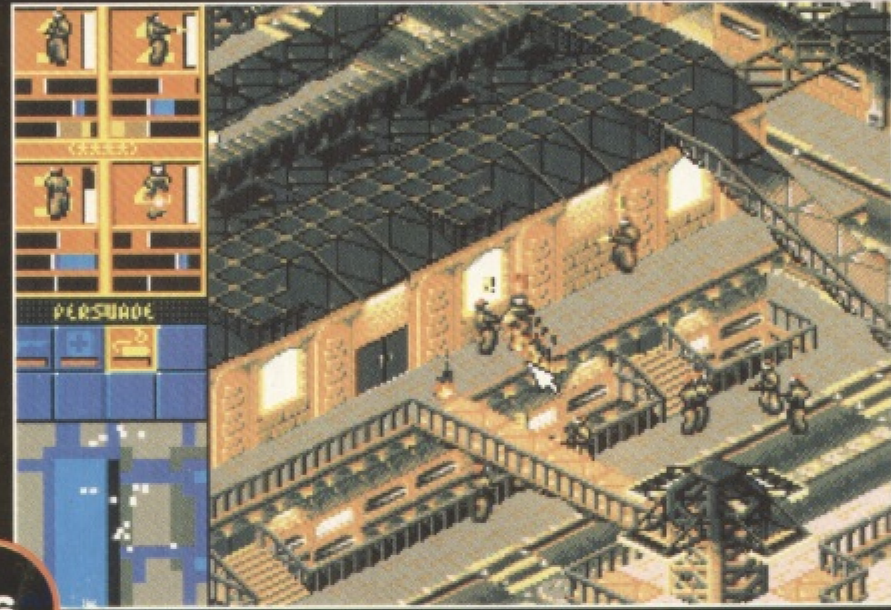
Finally we come to Intelligence, which governs how the agent will react to situations. High intelligence will mean that an agent will kill anyone he sees to be a threat if he is armed and flee from danger if he isn't. This is perfect for clearing potentially hostile buildings. If the agent is in a situation where you don't actually want him to go around killing people - he's surrounded by police, for example - then lower the intelligence and he will just stand there like a lemon.

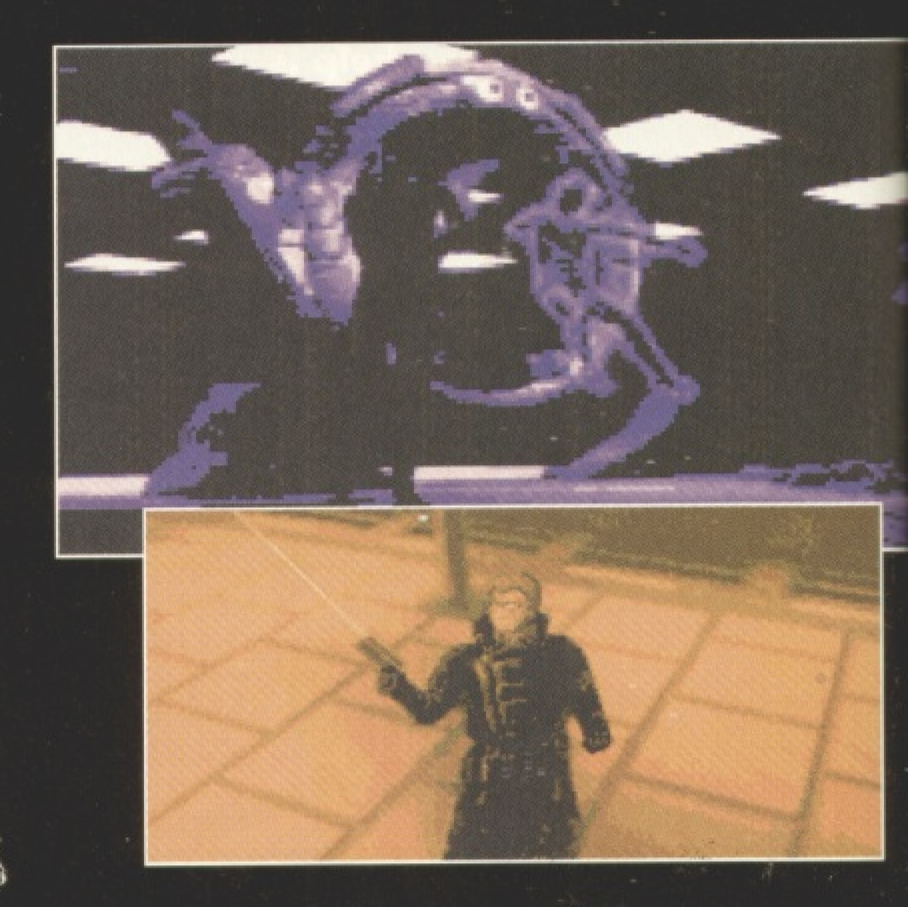
READING AND SIGHTING

Once you have the hang of setting up and controlling your agents, you can turn your attention to the missions themselves. Possibly the most important thing you can do is read the briefing. This might sound like an odd thing to watch out for but too many people skip over the briefing screen in their haste to get at the action. This will merely consign you to an early grave. Read the information thoroughly and spend the money necessary to get whatever extra information you can. Once you've read the briefing then you can decide on the equipment to take with you. Here's the full run down on the weapons available to you:

• The pistol is a free and fairly effective weapon and has a slightly longer range than the shotgun. Although we wouldn't strongly recommend it as a main weapon, it's fine as a back up, or for use when the opposition are armed with shotguns,

• The shotgun is cheap and more









powerful than the pistol. Ideal for close-up work, the best way to use it is to hide in doorways, wait for an opposing agent to open it and then open fire.

• The Uzi will quickly become the backbone of many of your operations. Quite cheap but easily maintained, it can be used in a variety of situations but uses up ammunition like you would not believe.

• The Flamer is the most lethal close range weapon there is. The best tactics to employ with it is along the same lines as the shotgun. One thing to watch out for is the weight - unmodified agents should really steer clear of this one, as it can wear them out in no time.

• The Long Range rifle is ideal for sniping. Give it to an agent, mount him on a rooftop some distance from the battle zone and let him pick off enemy agents in his own time. Although it can't really be used against enemy vehicles, it's great for emptying areas of opposing units.

• The mini-gun is about as good as an automatic weapon can get. Single bursts of this are all you need to wipe out all but the toughest of agents and vehicles. Towards the end of the game this should replace the Uzi as the standard armament for your units. Again, though, watch out for the weight. Unmodified agents should steer clear of this one too.

• The laser is pure anti-tank weaponry, with a very long range. The ideal back-up weapon, it'll make canned spam out of the hardest vehicles the enemy has to throw at you.

• Finally, we come to the Gauss gun - a portable missile launcher that spits napalm missiles. It only has a short range but the most devastating explosion imaginable. Fire it into an enclosed space and get ready to roast those marshmallows. The time bomb works in exactly the same way, except rather than firing it, you'll need to actually carry it in and drop it on the spot - then run like hell!

MINTY TAC TICS

Now you actually have the hang of your team and their weapons, let's talk tactics. Using group mode is all very well and can work wonderfully against large targets - when you instruct one agent to open fire, they all open fire. However, moving around in a group like this leaves you open to attack, so it can be useful to use the scatter option.

During long bouts of combat, it can be a great advantage to you to have your agents all over the place. This way you can surround the opposition and come in firing at all angles - the enemy can't fire in all directions at once. Use a similar tactic when defending an area: Look around carefully and decide where the more likely attack positions will be and then scatter your agents liberally around them.

When you are used to both group mode and scatter mode there are some other, slightly more complicated ways of moving about that you might like to master. The skirmish line is an excellent full frontal attack. With this all you do is line your men up side-by-side and then walk forwards toward the enemy. When the opposition is engaged, instruct your men to fire on one spot.

Taking a leaf from fighter aircraft, you might want to try the drag formation. This involves a point man, who should be heavily armoured taking the lead, two flank agents a couple of blocks behind and stood to either side and a support agent further back armed with long range weaponry. With this formation, the point man locates the enemy and the flank agents take them out. If the flank can't take the flak then the support agent can step in and finish everything off.

Guards can be a real pain to deal with, especially with so many of them stuck in out of the way places. Essentially there are four different ways you will encounter guards, so here are the four different ways of dealing with them.

• For guards who just stand out in the open shoot them with a long range rifle.

• For guards who stand in the open but are suddenly very close to you (if you round a corner and walk straight into one) then split the party in two and attack from two directions. Better still is to get a car (the easiest way to do this is to shoot a car a couple of times until the driver gets out and runs away) and just drive past them with a shotgun blazing.

• For those really nasty guards who stand on roadbridges just run them down or drive past them as fast as you can and shoot them on the way.

• Finally, you have the kind of guard that hides behind closed doors. For these, just get in close to the door, be ready with a shotgun, boost the agent's intelligence and perception, turn the adrenalin right up and then open the door.

With your new found knowledge and understanding, it shouldn't take you any time at all in becoming the despotic ruler of the entire planet. Happy hunting.



WORLDS

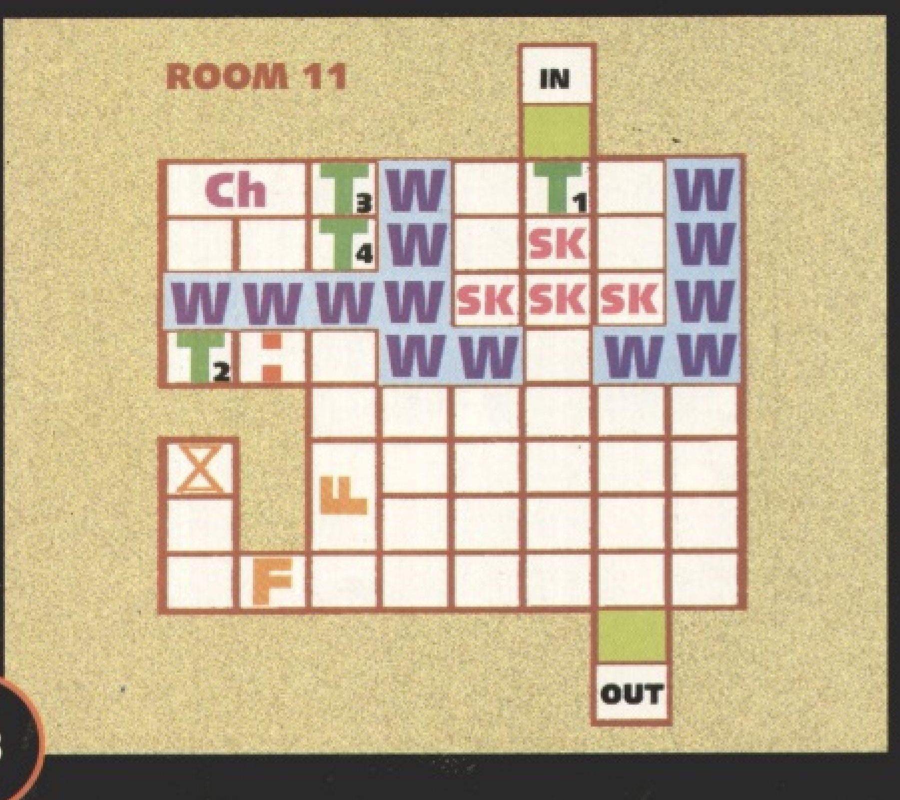
IYOTO LEVEL 1

Iyoto

LEVEL 1

After completing your tasks at Kishyai you will have been given a dark key, giving you access to the Keep of Iyoto which is where you should find yourself now. If you don't, then get over here as quick as you can. We're all waiting for you, you know! Once you get here take a look at the map. It might look confusing, but in fact there isn't a hell of a lot going on. You start in room S, where a sign reads "Castle Vaults. It is hereby decreed...". You'll need to use the dark key here to get through the south door.

The only two rooms of any real interest on this level are Rooms 11 and 18, both of which are puzzle rooms. Get through those and then head for Room 24, which contains some steps leading down to the level below. See you down there in a few minutes!

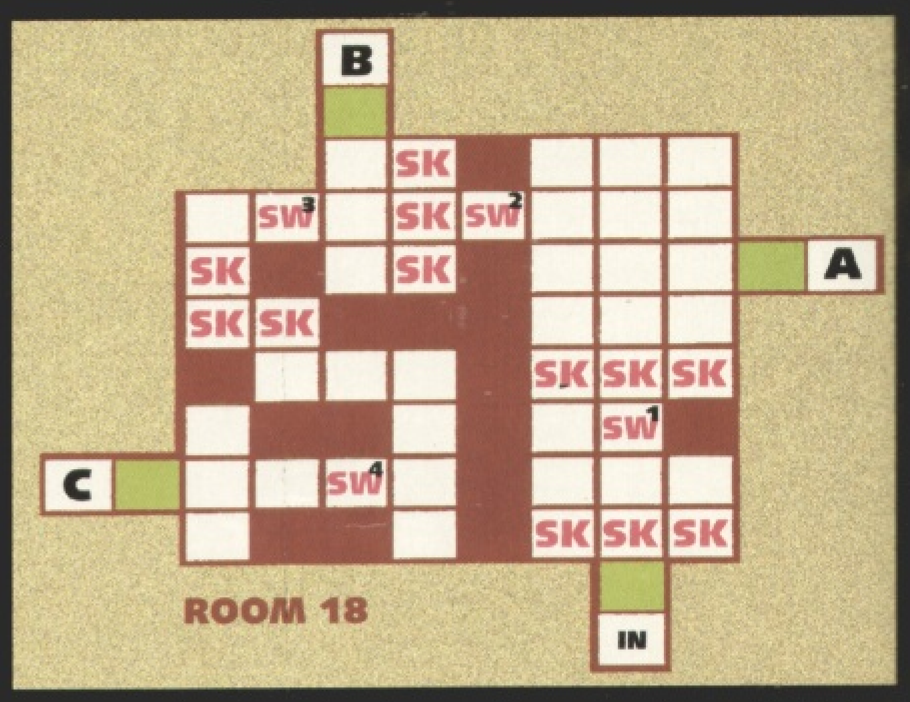


ROOM 11

This is quite a short and simple room but we're still going to tell you how to do it. All you need to do in this room is reach the south exit. No, it isn't that easy! For the sake of ease, I will refer to characters by letter. Unless stated, it doesn't matter who is A or who is B, etc, just keep the characters constant for each room, OK?

Right, first move character A onto the teleport pad marked T1. That person will be teleported back and forth between teleport pads T2 and T3 over and over again. Probably worth doing something about it, so get the Runemaster to cast Missile Dispell Paralyse Teleport at pad T3 until character A stops bouncing all over the shop. This might take a couple of attempts.

Now move character A to the front of the long chest, where he/she can open it and take out the ruby key. Now use the key to open the south door. There - told you it was easy!



ROOM 18

The sign at the start of this room tells you straight away that this will involve a little bit of leap frogging. Just in case you haven't played the game - and to be honest I could never understand the point of it myself (mind you, I could never quite understand the rules of Cowboys and Indians, but I digress) - it involves leaping over people to get further along the line. Your eventual aim is to reach the west exit.

The first floor switch will teleport a character to one of the three skull tiles by the south entrance. To get past the switch you will need to occupy all three skull tiles. This is the same principle that applies to all the switch tiles in this room. When you have a character past the first switch, leave by the west exit and return with the crystal key. Now perform the same routine for floor switch SW2, this time heading north.

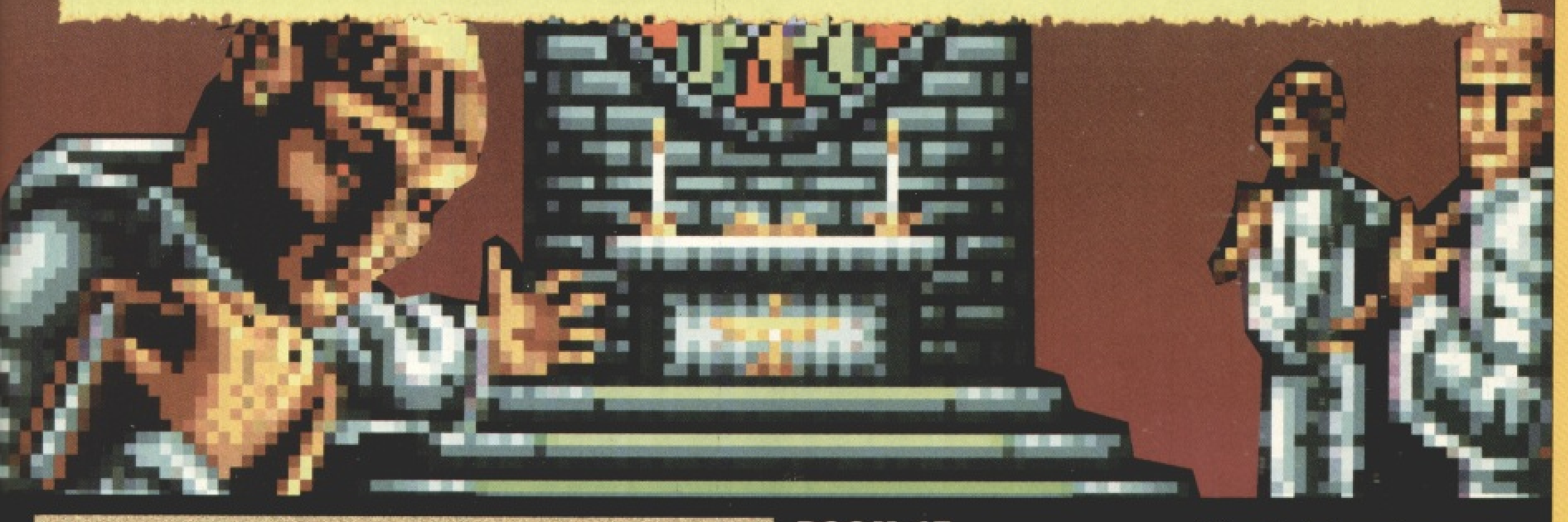
Your only problem with this level will happen when you return with the emerald key. Stand three characters on the skull tiles in the north of the room and stand the last character on SW3. Now use Missile Teleport to make each character leap to the next set of skull tiles. With that done, you can now walk someone to SW4 and unlock the west exit.

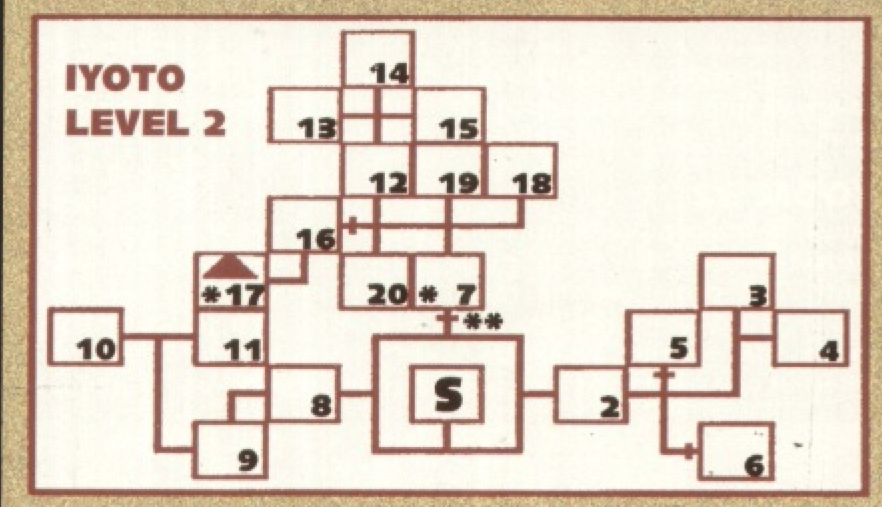
LEVEL 2

Yet another complicated-looking map. The first room you come to contains a sign, as they always seem to, this one reading "The mark of chaos...". There are only a couple of things to do on this floor. First off, check out Room 7, otherwise known as yet another one of those puzzle rooms, and Room 16, which has a rather interesting sign which tells of dormant magic!

OF LEGEND

So, you managed to struggle through Imperia and even made it through Kishyai! Don't rest yet, as there's still plenty more to do in this, the second part our complete Son On The Empire solution.





The best room of all, however, has to be Room 17. Yes, it's another puzzle room, but it also holds the second amulet shard. So all you need to do is get to that room, solve the puzzle, and then return to Auntie Sushiana. What's more, we're even going to tell you how to solve the puzzle! We spoil you something rotten, we really do.

ROOM 7

This one might look tricky but it isn't really. The first thing you need to do is get character A to push skull tile SKa eastward twice. The tile moves east one square each time and moving it twice means that character B, on the other side of the water, has access to the north. By the way, you won't be able to use the second character until you have entered this room using the Silver key.

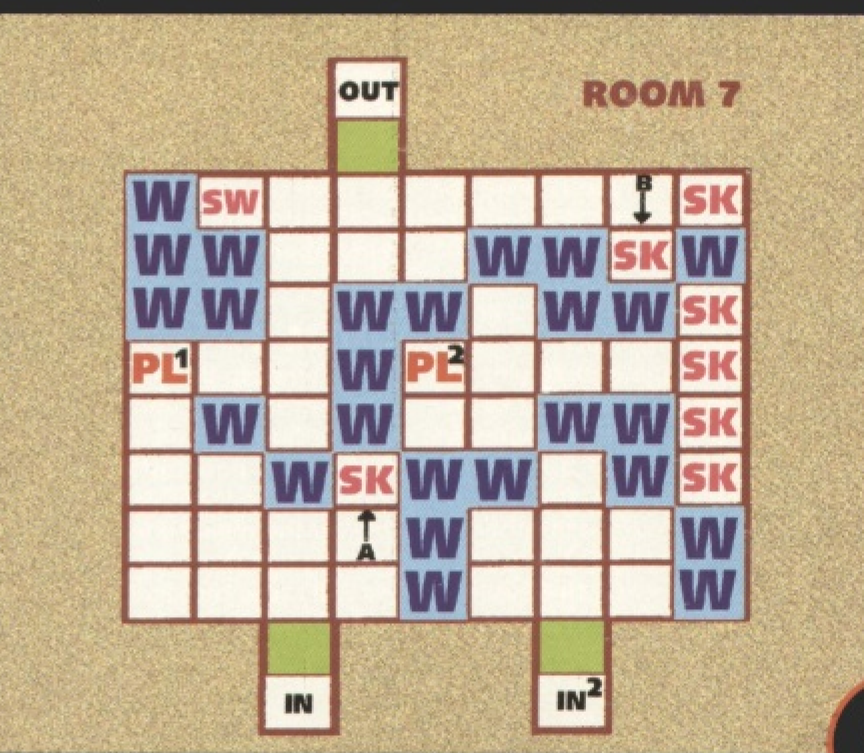
Once 'B' has reached the middle of the room, push the lever marked PL2. This will move the skull tile marked SKb eastwards. Now you can walk character B to the north exit. A warning - as you step off the skull tile in the north east it will turn to water.

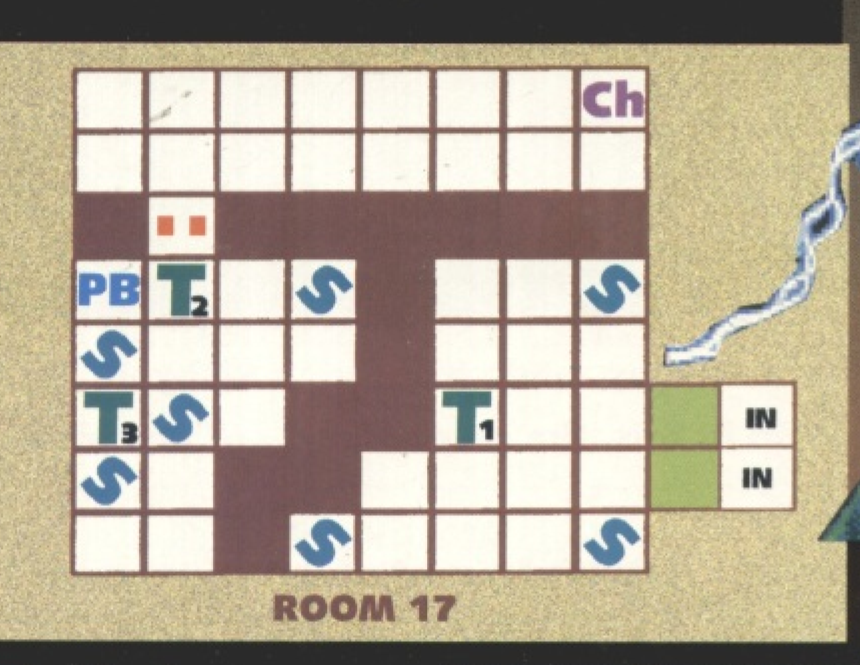
When returning through this room use the north-west floor switch to move skull tile SKa back to the west so that the entire party can cross and leave by the south door

ROOM 17

In here you will find the second part of the amulet. If you want to know, it's in the chest in the north-east corner. Before you can get to it, though, you'll need to stand three characters on the three floor runes near the entrance. Now walk the remaining character onto the teleport pad marked T1.

When that character reappears get them to push the lever on PB and step back as bolts fly in every direction. Now step onto pad T3, and the column will disappear! Push PB again and step onto the floor rune east of T2 - the spikes will lower. Now you can just walk to the chest and take the amulet! Isn't life grand?



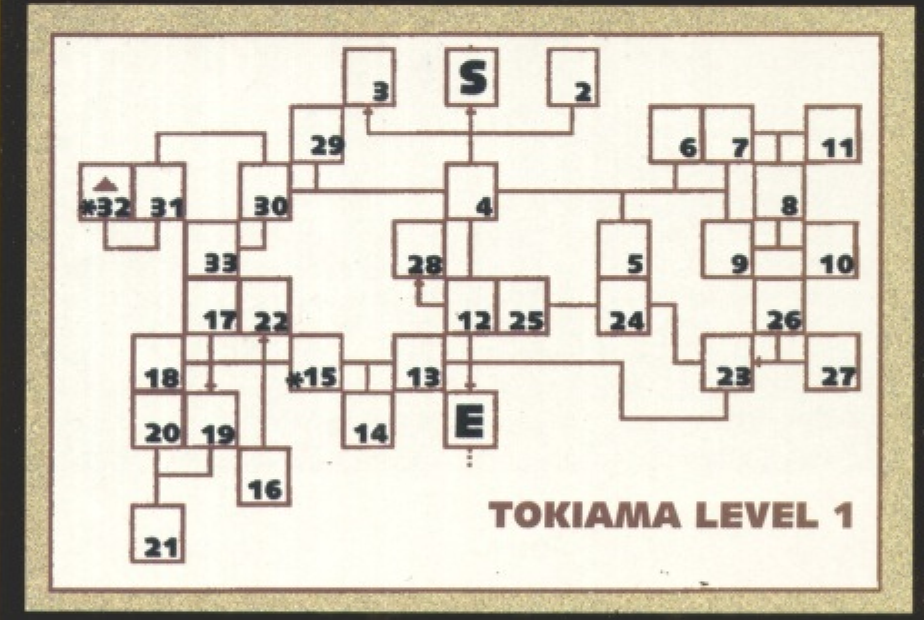


Tokiama

LEVEL 1

Another key, another dungeon. This time you're in for some real action. From your start room, you have the choice of two doors leading south. Well, you don't really, as one of them just won't budge. To get through the other you'll need the moon key that Auntie gives you in return for the second amulet shard.

There's a fairly complicated moving passageway leading from Room 4 and it might take a little explanation. In Rooms 3, 5 and 28 you will find some levers. Each pull of the levers rotates the two passageways leading from Room 4 around the room by a quarter turn. The exits are set at right angle to each other, so if you imagine that one leads north while one leads east, then pulling the lever will result in the ex-north corridor leading east and the ex-east corridor leading south. You got that? Draw a diagram, and that should help.



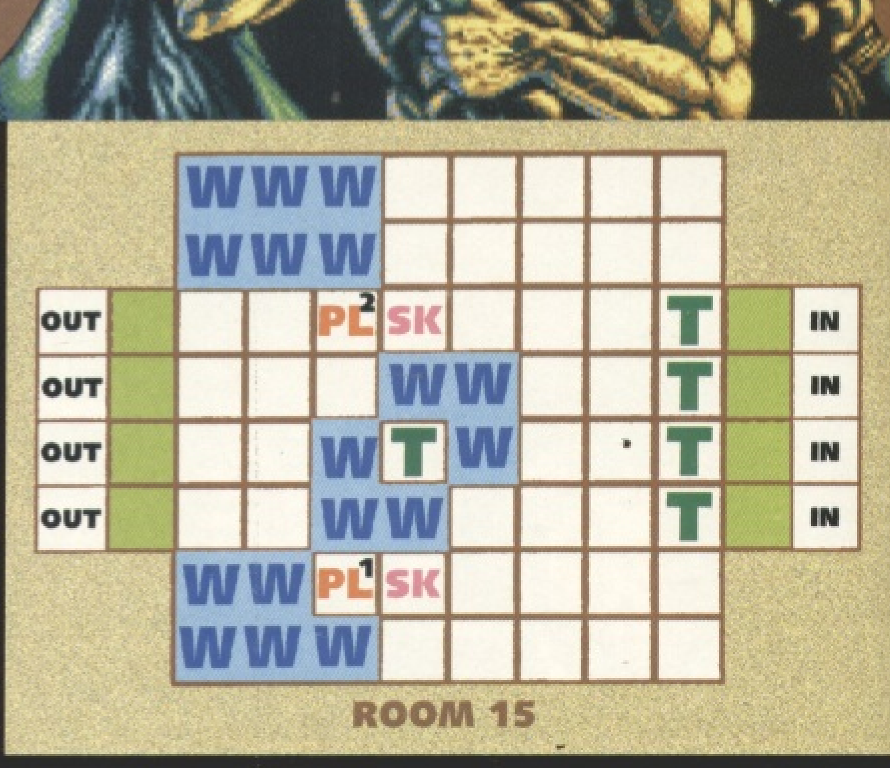
Other rooms of interest include the magnificent Room 15, a puzzle room, and the stunning Room 32, which not only holds the third shard but is also a puzzle room.

Room 28 can only be reached once you have completed Level 2. The lever in here should be pulled three times, which will create a south and west exit from Room 4. Now head west from Room 4. Once you have the shard, leave immediately and return to your Auntie (remembering to save the game before you go).

ROOM 15

All you want to do here is reach the west exit. The first thing you'll need to do is fight a monster on one of the teleport pads by the east exit and keep him there as long as possible. In the meantime, get character A to push the lever on PL2 once. This will cause the skull tile near PL1 to move north.

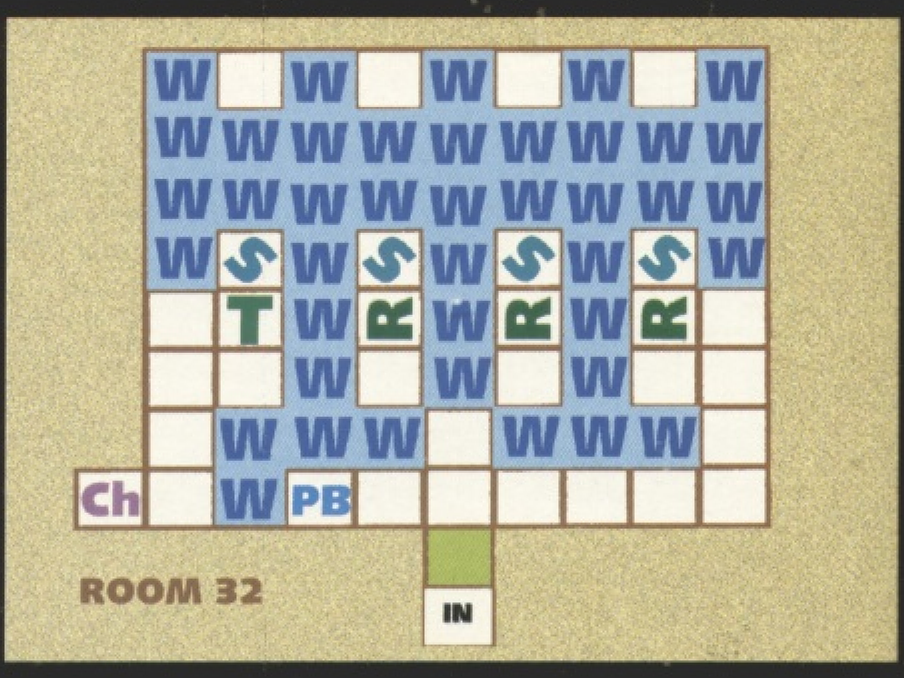
Now occupy all four teleport pads on the east side using the paralysed monster on one of them. Step character A onto the middle pad and get one of the characters to the east to quickly run to PL1 and push it. A can now walk into the west side of the room and kill all the monsters.



ROOM 32

The third amulet shard has to be recovered from the chest in the south-west corner of the room. Watch out for the shooting pillars which fire at the floor runes. Whoever you use to get the shard must be able to antimage and regenerate themselves quickly. Stand that character near the far-east teleport rune.

Get a character to push the pillar button. A teleport spell will be fired across the room, giving you little time to move your nominated character onto the floor rune where they will be hit and teleported to the next rune. Do this twice more, getting the teleporting chap to regen-

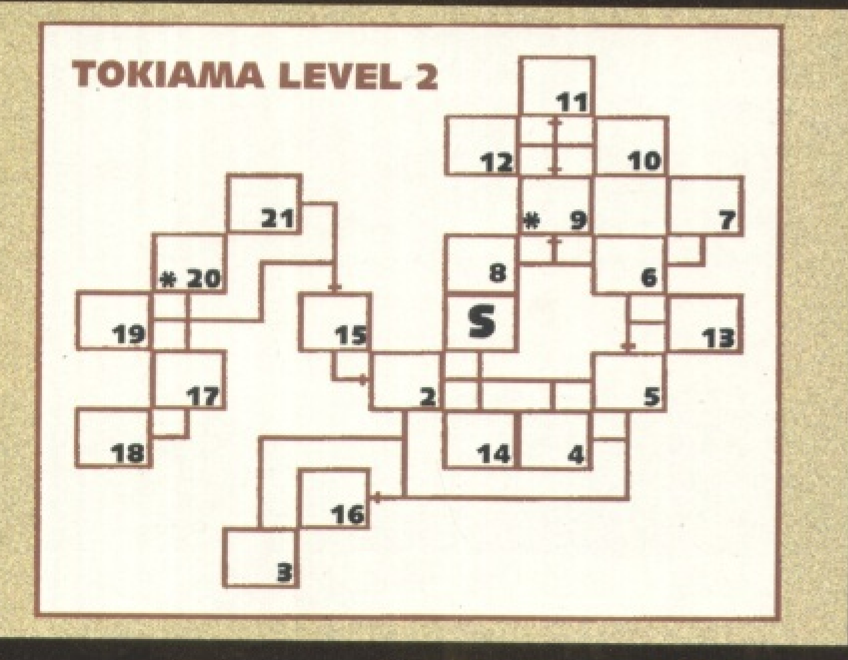




erate a couple of times along the way, and then they can quickly run to the chest and grab the shard.

LEVEL 2

This level needs to be completed before you can grab the shard from upstairs. Mind you, there isn't that much to do considering how far you are into the game. You'll need a ruby key for Room 4 and a crystal key for Room 7. Other than that, you'll find some more of those fabulous puzzle rooms in Room 9 (a very dangerous one) and Room 20.



One more word before you go - if you're looking for your third lost key you'll find it in Room 14.

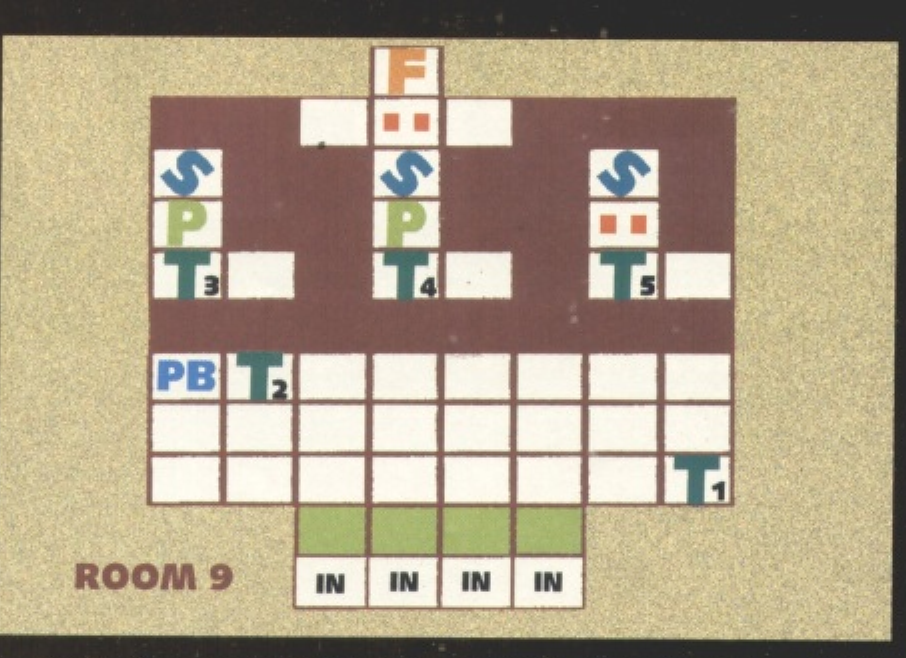
ROOM 9

Well, I said this was a dangerous one and I wasn't lying. The north-east door is locked and to get out you'll need the topaz key from the north-west chest. Okay, here goes. The shooting pillars are firing damaging spells at the floor runes, so quickly move three characters onto the middle teleport pad and they'll be thrown to the three skull tiles in the south-west corner. The last character has to press the pillar button, so make sure they can magically protect themselves. That character can now walk to the chest and get the key, and everyone can quickly run, giving themselves time to change their underwear.

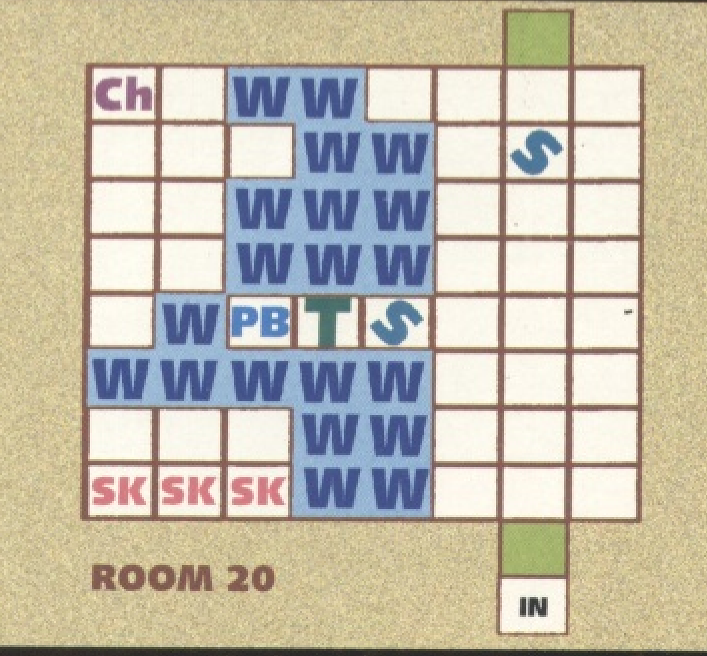
ROOM 20

Here you will have to get the gold key needed on Level 1 from the furniture in the north of the room. Here's how to do it. Stand the Runemaster by the pillar button PB actually on the teleport pad T2. Push PB and the Runemaster will do a circuit of the room, ending on T2.

Stand character A on T1 and get another one (character B) ready to step onto T2. Get the Runemaster to press PB and then walk him onto T2. The Runemaster will end up on T5. Now get the Runemaster to cast Missile Damage on the floor rune north of T5. Now get character B to push PB and he'll end up on T4. Take the Runemaster off T5 and then put him back on, and he'll fly back to T2. Push the button once more, and he'll appear on T3. Another Missile Damage, this time at the rune in the north-west corner, and the pillar in the middle of the room will vanish.



Finally, move A onto T2 and B off and then back on to T4. Character B will then appear on T5. The Runemaster should now come off T3 and then get back on it, reappearing on T4, and cast one more Missile Damage on the floor rune north of the spikes. The spikes will drop and he can take the key from the furniture. Hooray!



Next month is the final part so rest up, learn some spells and sharpen your swords!

EXIT	FLOOR SPIKES	Gr GRILLE	FLOOR RUNE
W WATER	Ch CHEST	P PILLAR	R FLOOR RUNE
PL PILLAR LEVER	C COLUMN	LOCKED DOOR	FLOOR RUNE
PB PILLAR BUTTON	F FURNITURE	SK SKULL TILE	FLOOR RUNE
SW FLOOR SWITCH	Fo FOUNTAIN	FLOOR TILE	FLOOR RUNE
T TELEPORT PAD	Fi FIRE	ROOM SOLUTION	

ISHAR 2

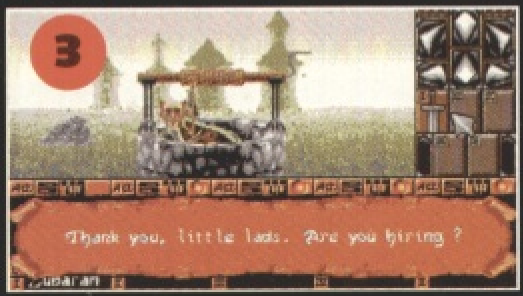
Having trouble saving Arborea from the clutches of the evil hordes? Getting sand kicked in your face every time? Try our high-protein, crash-weight-gain beginners guide.



This is where the fun begins. You see those guys in front of you beating that woman to death? Do not approach them, as they are three times as hard as you and can quite easily grind you to a pulp. Instead, head north west to the village,



Ah, civilisation, you think to yourself. And not before time, too. Why are you here? You have come to recruit, drink and be merry, as well as pick up a few provisions along the way. Head for the centre of the village.



Here you will find a well, with this thief inside. Turn the handle to bring him up. He goes by the name of Kudsac and isn't to be trusted for a moment. Recruit him, then take all his possessions and kill him. Sorry, did I say he was the one who couldn't be trusted?



Find the inn and recruit some characters. The best ones to go for at this stage are Eliandr the scholar, Zeloran the magician, Fandhir the archer and any warrior of your choice. Leave the inn, find the shop and stock up on weaponry. One of the most important things you can buy is a bow and loads of arrows, so make sure you get them before you start splashing out on expensive swords and fancy hats.



Now head south for the harbour - it's the small rectangle on the map in the south-west corner. Here you will meet this guy, who might seem friendly enough but that's only because he is. However, he won't allow you to board the boat so you'll have to attack him.



Oh no! You had only just hit him when you were taken prisoner by the guards and dragged before the Lord of the island. Your sentence? To sit and listen to him drivel on about how sad he is about his daughter losing a trinket. Mind you, if you can find the necklace, he might just let you borrow one of his boats!



Irvan's Island

Myrnidons of Shandar...sacrifice...escaped pendant...for you...birds...tales... save Kendor...aaahh... It's all up with me. aahhh...Dwilgelindil...argh !!!

(Above) The men lie dead, and the woman lies very nearly dead. But what's this twaddle she's saying? Who can say, but that's a very nice necklace she's wearing. Could it be...? Nah. Did you really think it was going to be that easy?



Back in the big wide world again, head for your starting position, to the south and east. You'll spot it a mile off because there are all these standing stones scattered about. Now is the time to take out those rogues. The best way to attack them is to fire from a distance using your arrows. This weakens them, allowing you to step forward and finish them off with a few deft and impressive moves.

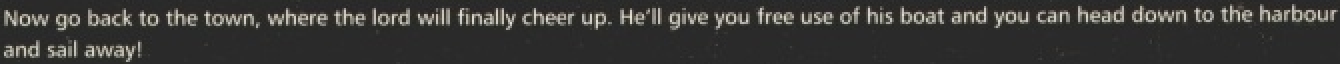
Once you have the necklace and head east into the forest. Then go north to find the black and white mushrooms and then get the dandelions from the extreme north, surrounded by stones. Watch out for the wasps!

Irvan's Island



Now head south towards the clearing in the woods and you'll be attacked by a couple of Orcs. You should dispose of them in no time at all. The real battle comes with this guy - the Chief Orc. To kill him, keep your distance and lob as many arrows at him as you can. Then, when he's sufficiently weakened, you can step in for the kill. Then take the necklace from around his neck.

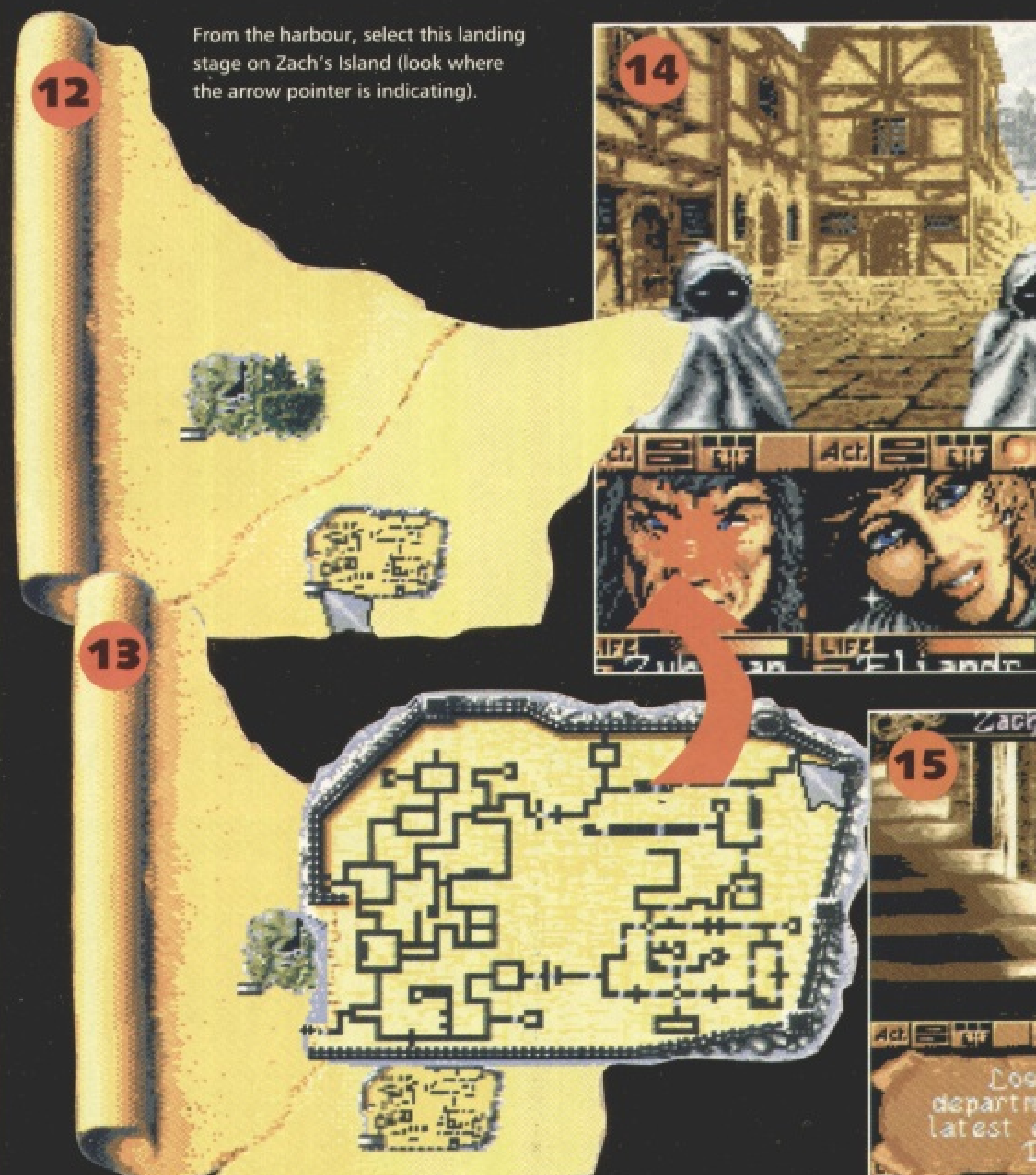




Now go back to the town, where the lord will finally cheer up. He'll give you free use of his boat and you can head down to the harbour and sail away!



On your way to and from the library, you'll meet a lot of people who look like this. You can tell that they are thieves by their shifty eyes, funny walks and the way that they attack you on sight. If you're running low on money you might like to try your hand at being a vigilante, searching the city for these characters and killing them for the money they carry.



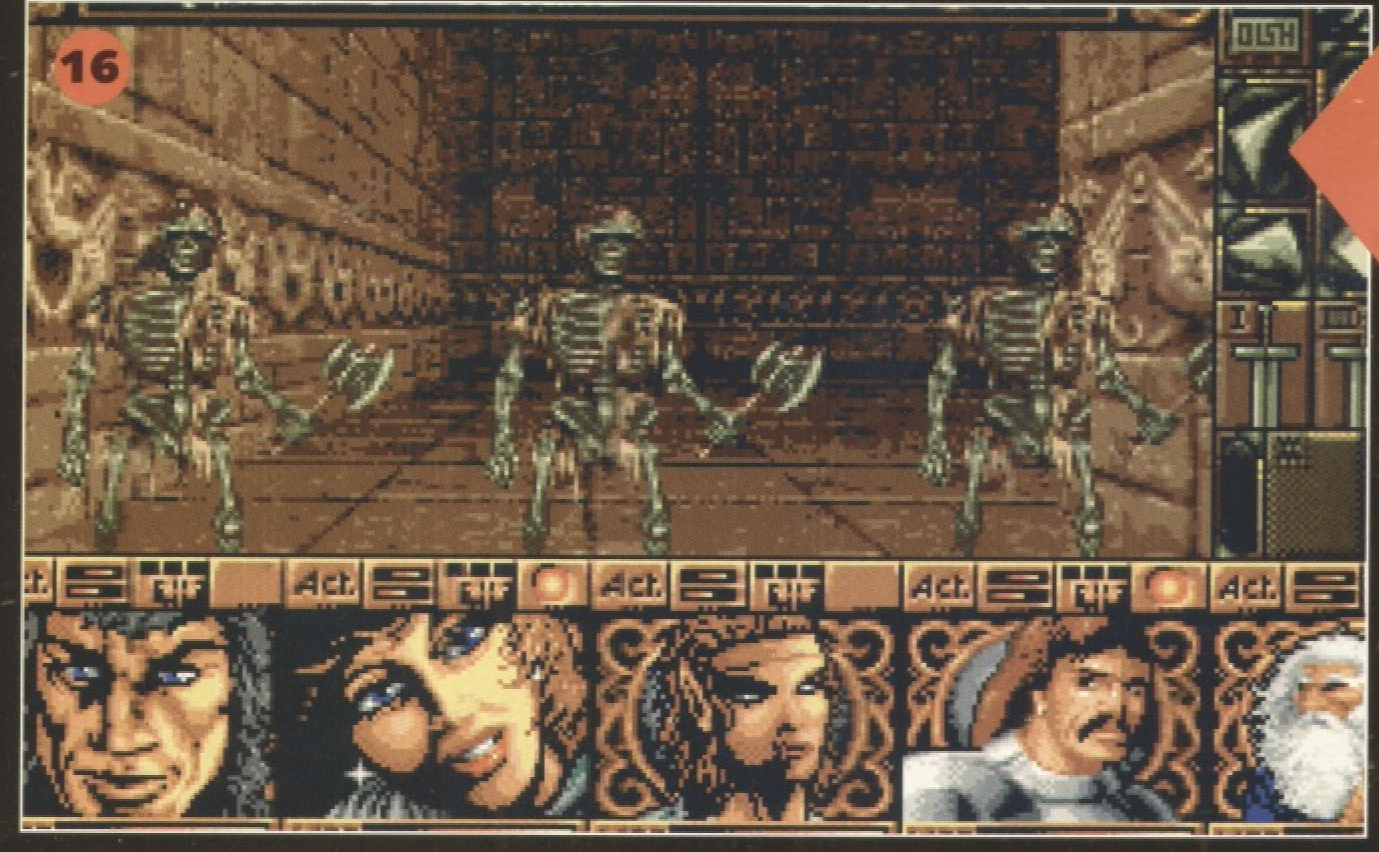
From the harbour, select this landing stage on Zach's Island (look where the arrow pointer is indicating).

Here's the map of Zach's Island. Although it's a fairly busy city, you won't be spending much time here yet. You start in the south west corner of the map, and want to make your way to the extreme north east corner - that tiddly little bit stuck right up there. That's where you'll find the library.

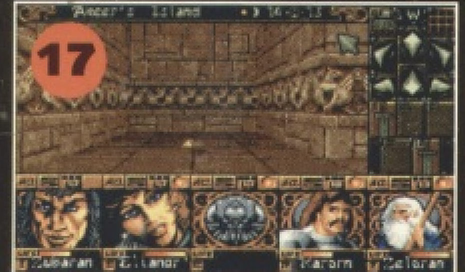


At the library you'll find a scroll giving you access to the fortress on Akeer's Island. Believe it or not, that's about all you need to do on this island. From here on, head for the harbour, stopping off to eat and sleep on the way. You're going to need your strength once you get to Akeer's Island.





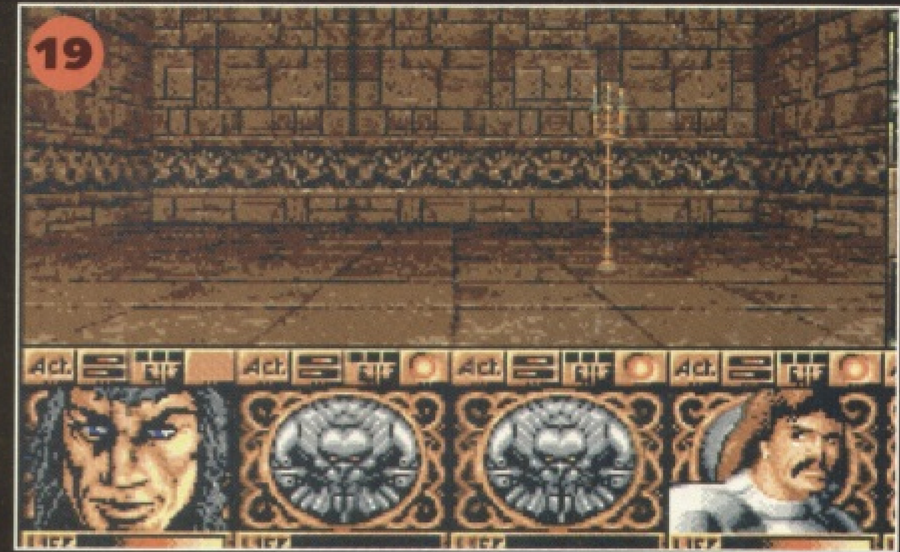
From the landing stage on Akeer's Island, head east following the wall to your right at all times. Before too long you'll have to dispose of some fairly tough skeletons. Don't worry too much, as they shouldn't cause you too much hassle.



When you come to a passage to the south, head down it. At the end, you'll find two dead-end turnings. Down one you'll find treasure and down the other you'll find a skull. Collect both and head back to the main passage.



Now head east and take the next opening south. When you reach a large room, head through it to the extreme south-east then go south, then east and finally north. In this passageway, you'll find two handles. Activate both of them.



Keep heading north, enter the large room at the end and activate the handle on the north wall. Now head to the extreme south east, follow the corridor and collect the skull at the end of it.



Now head back to the corridor with the handles on the walls. Follow the west wall and you'll find you can walk around it. On the other side, you'll find a treasure room. Pick up everything you find and then return to the landing stage.

NEXT MONTH!

That's it for now - there'll be more action-packed adventuring when this complete solution continues next month!

WAR IN THE

Marching around in tanks is such fun, but sometimes they just don't seem as indestructible as they first appear. Here's our handy guide to keeping your platoon in one piece.



GENERAL TIPS

• At first glance, War In The Gulf is very complicated indeed. With four windows on-screen and up to sixteen tanks to manoeuvre at once, is it any wonder that many novice players who attack the first tanks they see end up destroying their own platoons?

Therefore, the first thing that any player should do is play the demonstration game provided, following all instructions given in the manual, until they get the hang of commanding and controlling the battle and all the units in it.

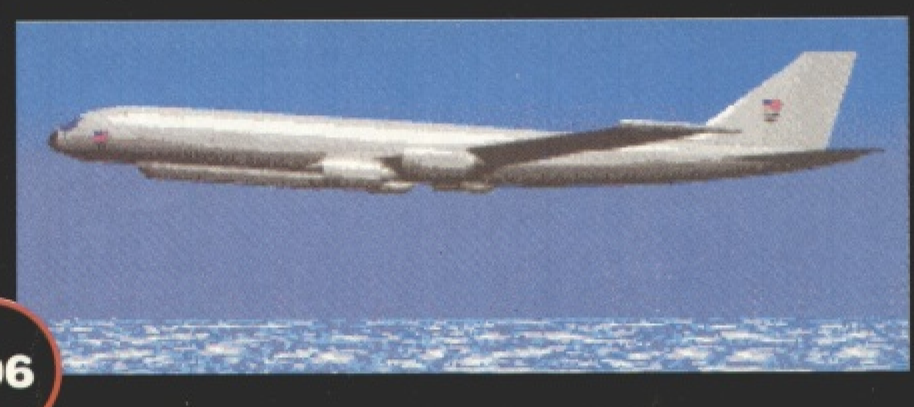
• Remember that M1 tanks have far more armour than any of your other units. Don't be too tempted to mix them within all your platoons. Instead, make up one or two units completely of M1 tanks and then use them to go on raids.

As back up, load up some of your other units with the long distance TOW missiles and hold them a little out of the battle, ready to step in when the going gets too tough. Bear in mind when laying out your units that the TOWs have a maximum range of 4km.

• If you are being blown away as soon as you get into battle, there are a couple of useful defensive strokes you can pull. Using engine smoke is a very efficient form of camouflage, making it far harder for the Iraqi vehicles to hit you. Their infra-red imaging is very poor, so keep the smoke on as much as you want. If you have it on most of the time, remember that you will then have to rely on infra-red imaging to see where you are going, which can cause problems in itself.

• As soon as an opposing vehicle opens fire on you, check your map as they will be noted on it. Figure out where they are in relation to you, and then attack them. This is a lot easier than running away, and is also far more effective!

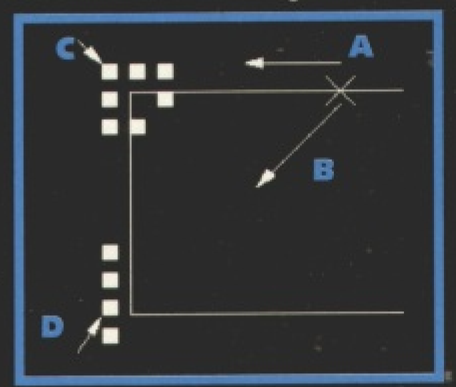
Also, use the lines of the land to move around. Move along the inside of the tree-lines if you can, as the camouflage of your vehicles will hide you as you survey the area and help shield you from surprise enemy attacks.



ISLAND 1: FAILAKA ISLAND

BATTLE 1

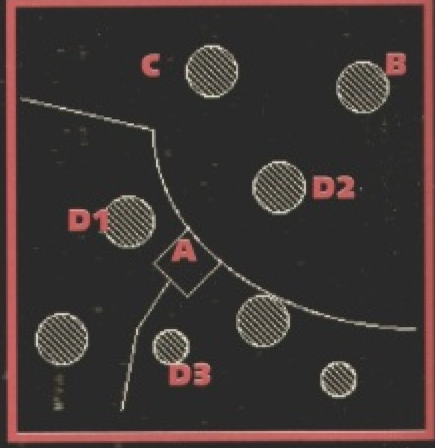
For your first battle, choose the top-left area. Here the aim is to track a convoy heading from the chemical weapons store in a northern village to a warehouse in a village to the south of the area. After that, all you need to do is destroy the two buildings. Here's the quick and easy solution:



From the start location, marked on the map with an X, move platoon A west along the main road to the northern village, and send platoon B diagonally south-west towards the southern village. Platoon A should soon see the convoy leaving the building. Destroy the building, but don't touch the vehicles. Unit A should now wait in the village, in case any Iraqi units try to enter it. By the time the second unit, Platoon B, reaches the southern village, you should be just in time to see the convoy entering the second warehouse. Destroy that building, but no others, and you've completed the first battle.

BATTLE 2

For your next battle, select the top-right area of the island. All you have to do here is get all the Iraqi forces out of the Ikaros archeological site, marked on our map as 'A'. Secure the area so that no other forces can enter, and finally locate a group of Gaskin missiles in the north-east area of the map, marked with a 'B'.

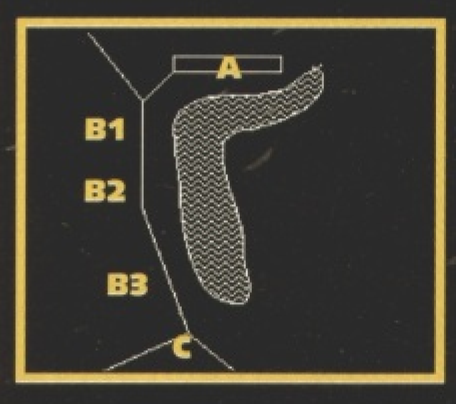


Be very careful not to damage any of the buildings in Ikaros, as that will immediately lose you the battle. The best way to ensure that the buildings don't get scratched is to attack from a distance using TOW missiles. This way, you can take out the Iraqis before they have time to load. The obvious thing to do now is to move your troops into the centre of the buildings. DON'T! Instead, hide them in small groups in the trees around the site and attack enemy forces when they try to enter. The fourth of your units can now scamper off to the north-east area of the map to locate the missile site.



GULF

BATTLE 3



In this final battle of Failaka Island, you have to provide cover and support for a group of vehicles moving from the north to the small village in the south of the map. You have about 16 minutes of game time to clear the road before they start rolling. At the same time, you will need to destroy the helicopters in airfield A.

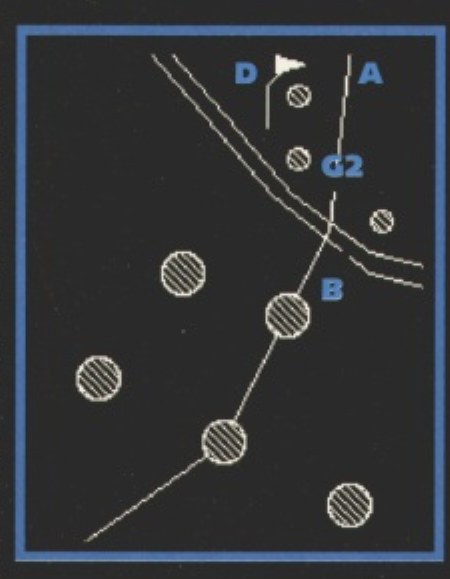
To clear the road, assign a unit to each of the ambush points shown on the map by B1, B2 and B3. Simultaneously attack the enemy units you find there and you should wipe them out in no time. Now move two of your units and hide them in the forest near the village C to ambush any enemy vehicles that might try their luck.

Send a spare unit to the north of the map and hide them in the forest directly opposite the middle of the airstrip. When all is clear, launch an all-out offensive on the helicopters parked there. If you start getting any trouble, you should have a unit free to race to your defence.

ISLAND 2: RUBIYAN ISLAND

BATTLE 4

The first battle on this island is a simple one. You need to move your troops over the bridge and at the same time knock out all the units defending the bridge area. Then you have to hole up and wait for the attacks to come from the south, while making sure that all your troops are hidden from view in the trees. To do this, just hide a unit to the north-east and north-west of the bridge, inside the tree line, and these will be able to wipe out any units approaching from the south.

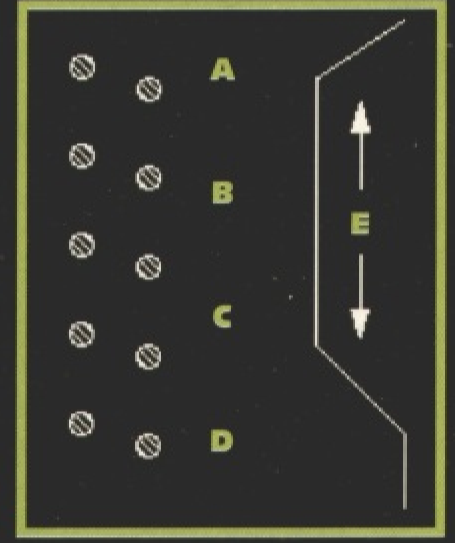


Your other two units should attack the police post to the north, marked with an 'A' on the map. The best route is marked on the map by a curved arrow, and shows you how to veer round the forest cover to the west and attack from the west side. To win the battle just hold out the at the bridge until the first thirty minutes of the battle are out of the way, then move on to the next, rather tricky one.



BATTLE 5

This one sounds quite simple but will require some fast tactical response from you. You are ordered to protect and defend a convoy travelling along the road from north to south and then back north again. Attacks will come from the west area of the map, so position your four units at the positions marked A, B, C and D and get ready for battle. This way, you don't need to move any of your units to cover the convoy, as together they cover the entire road.

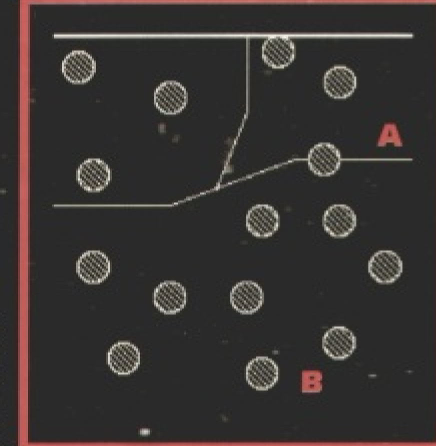


Now watch your map very carefully. At the first sign of trouble, open fire. Keep an eye on the position of the convoy, as this will show where attacks are most likely to come from. Just keep your cool, keep taking deep breaths and you should pull through.

BATTLE 6

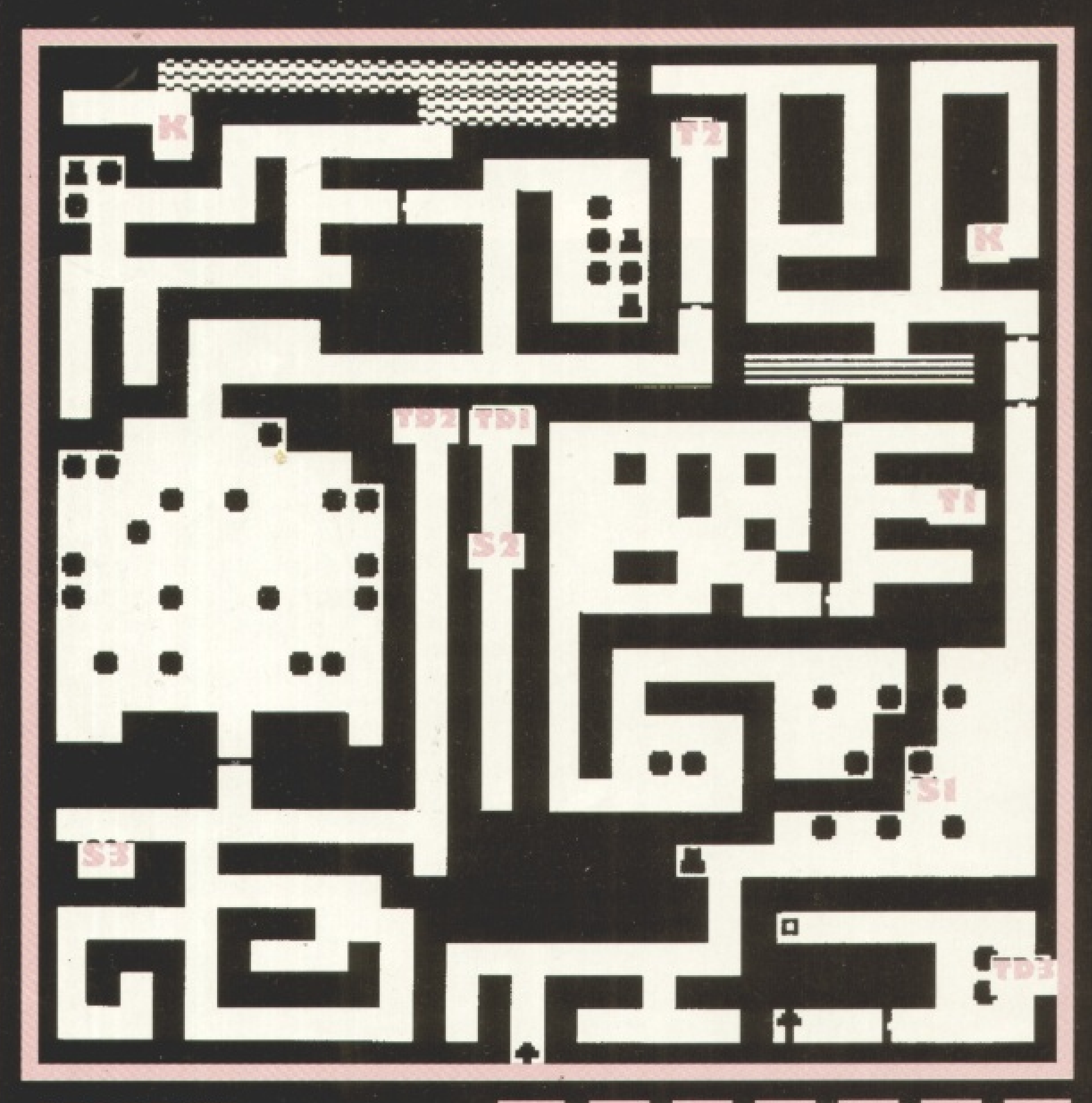
There are two main objectives in this mission. First, you will need to stop any Iraqi troops from running to the east along the main road, and second you'll need to locate two vehicles, hidden in random buildings around the map.

So, the first thing you want to do is position a strong group at the very eastern point of the east road (marked with 'A') to stop the troops fleeing. Then, you need to search the buildings. Don't blow them up to look for the tanks, as this will cost you a lot of money. Instead, use your infra-red sensors to check if they are inside. However, do blow up any of the buildings that will gain you money, such as radar towers or satellite dishes, as the battles are going to get pretty expensive from this point in.



The best way to search is to keep to the edges of the battle area whenever you can, to avoid most of the enemy attacks. Note that you only have a limited time to get to the rendezvous point at the end, marked on the map as 'B', so make sure you always have enough time to reach it. If you can destroy the three radar towers before you get there you're in for a hefty bonus!

ABANDONED PLACES 2



This is it - the final part of the complete Abandoned Places 2 solution! Together we've been through thick and thin over the last two months but at last you've got the chance to confront the *Master* and save the whole universe. Good luck, o brave one...

AFORE YE START...

Just to recap or if you're new to this solution, there are various references to grid co-ordinates throughout the text. If you imagine the square in the top-left corner of the map is co-ordinate (0, 0) then to get to co-ordinate (14, 18) you must count 14 squares right from the top-left corner and then 18 squares down. You'll then be at grid square (14, 18). Is that clear? (No - The whole world.) Right, carry on then...

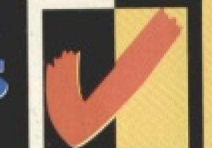
LEVEL 4

First get the key at (29, 6). Go back and use switch S1 (27, 23) which will open up the wall at (23, 23). Now go and open the door at (24, 16) using the crystal key and use teleporter T1 to zoom off to (14, 12). Now toggle switch S2 (14, 16) to get to (12, 12). Use a True-Seeing spell at (2, 25) to reveal switch S3 which will open the door at (6, 22). Head north and get the key from the water room at (4, 3) and use it to open the door at (20, 8). Use teleporter T3 (20, 3) to get to (30, 29) where you can choose to use either the pit or the stairs to go down to Level 5.

LEVEL 5

Use switch S1 (22, 10) and go through the door (20, 23). Get the key at (8, 19) and then go through the door at (9, 16). Use teleporter T1 (12, 17) which will whisk you to the fire room to the north-west corner of the map. Use a Levitate spell to reduce fire damage and then press S2 at (7, 12) which will reveal a hidden wall at (5, 13). Starting at (8, 11) run north to (8, 3). Step to (9, 3) and walk to (9, 12) which will reveal a passage at (5, 14). Run down the passage as if your life depends on it - which it does.

Now search the chests at (6, 23). Go via the stairs at (0, 30) to reach (19, 30). Use teleporter T2 (25, 19) to get to TD2 (16, 17). Open the door at (28, 13) and you'll find a hidden wall to your west. Get the key from the chest at (23, 7) and return to the door at (30, 8) and open it. A wall will open (not the door) to the north! Go through the wall and make your way down the stairs to Level 6.



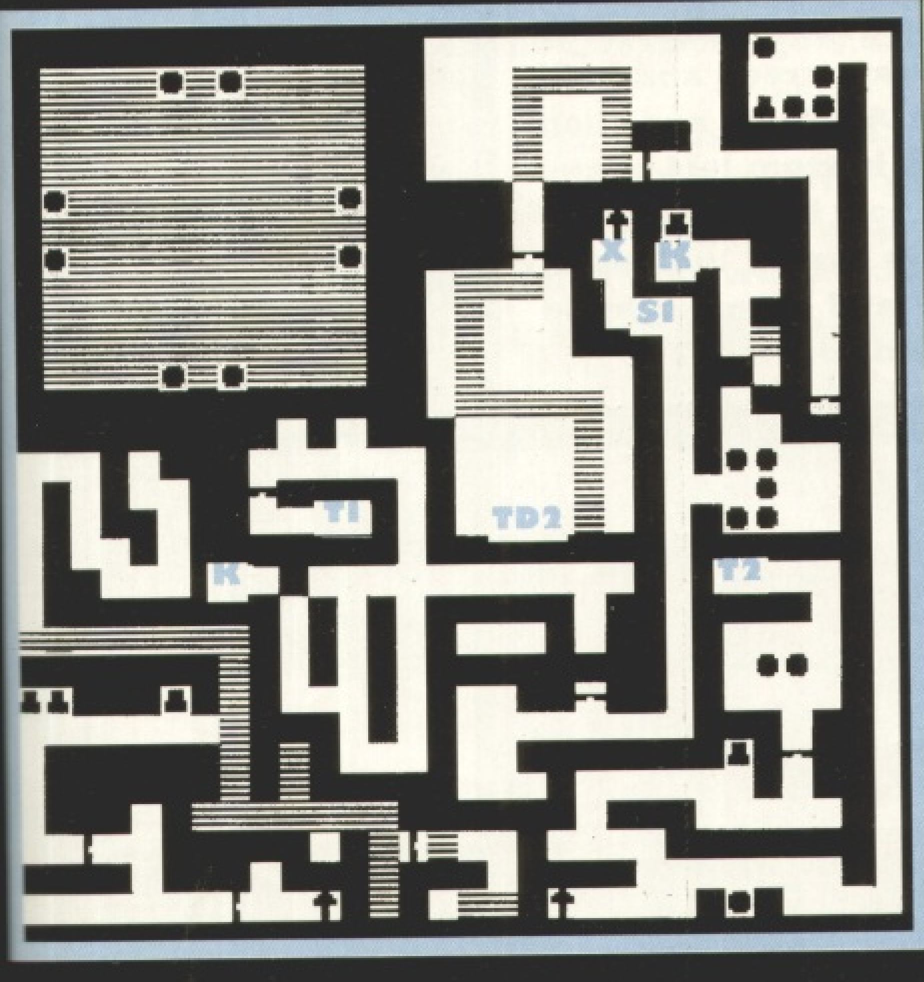
LEVEL 6

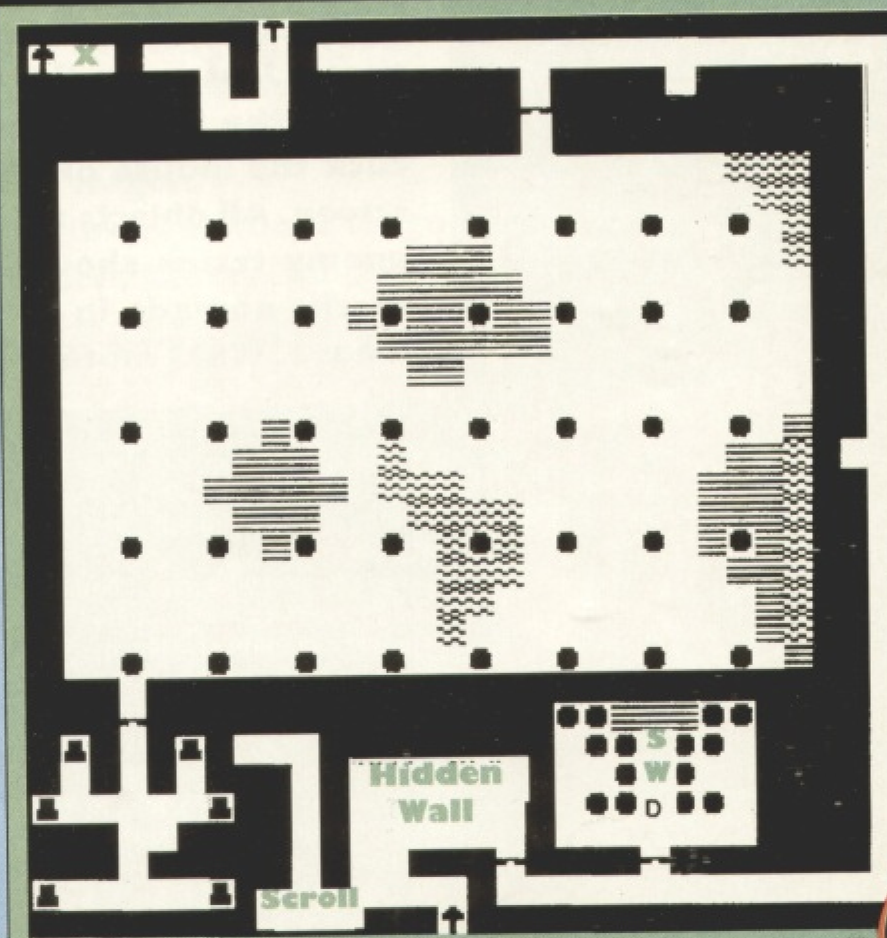
First off, use switch S1 (12, 26). This will open a door near by, but you'll have to be quick to get through it. Use switch S2 (17, 12) to reveal a wall at (18, 12). Use switch S3 (21, 9) to open the wall at (20, 9). Use the switch behind the wall and then use switch S4 (29, 24). Head north towards (9, 1) and activate the switches you find there. This will reveal a secret passage to the west. Go down the passage to the stairs leading to Level 7 and your destiny.

LEVEL 7

Phew! This is it - the final confrontation. Use a True-Seeing spell near the entrance to find two keys. Make your way to the stairs which'll take you to (15, 31). Use a True-Seeing spell to reveal a wall at (12, 26) and use switch S1 (15, 26) to open the door. Leave the room via the door and go through (22, 29). Kill the monsters to get the sword and then head for (18, 2). Go through the door and enter the room.

One of the pools of water will transport you to a chest room where you'll find magical items that'll help you defeat the Master. When he's been killed he'll drop a key. Re-enter the chest room and get the scroll at (10, 30). Now use the scroll and you'll have completed the game! Well done!





TRANSARCTICA

Are you finding yourself getting completely derailed in Silmarils' fun train game? Don't worry - our player's guide will keep you on the right track.

To really get anywhere with this mammoth game, you'll need to get hold of a crane, a missile launcher, a very large watchtower, as many machine guns as you can lay your hands on and more soldiers than the foreign legion and all of World Wars 1 and 2 put together. If that lot doesn't see you through, then work your way through these plot points, and you should find yourself completing the game in no time...

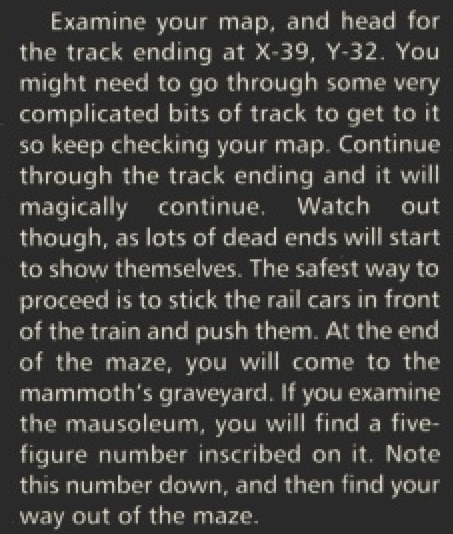
The first thing you'll need to buy is the driller wagon, used for drilling, funnily enough. You'll find this in the small village of Rhum, located at X-61, Y-11. You'll probably notice that you can't actually get to Rhum to begin with, so you'll need to get hold of some slaves and girders so that you can build a bridge to the town.

With the driller wagon attached, head all the way back through the map to a track ending at X-32, Y-67. This might seem like a strange place to end up but great things are afoot. Place the driller at one end of the train and drive towards the end of the line with the driller taking the lead. By some miracle the driller will open a passage through the mountain. You can now continue west and end up at the 'Oasis'. Here you will collect a key. Very important.

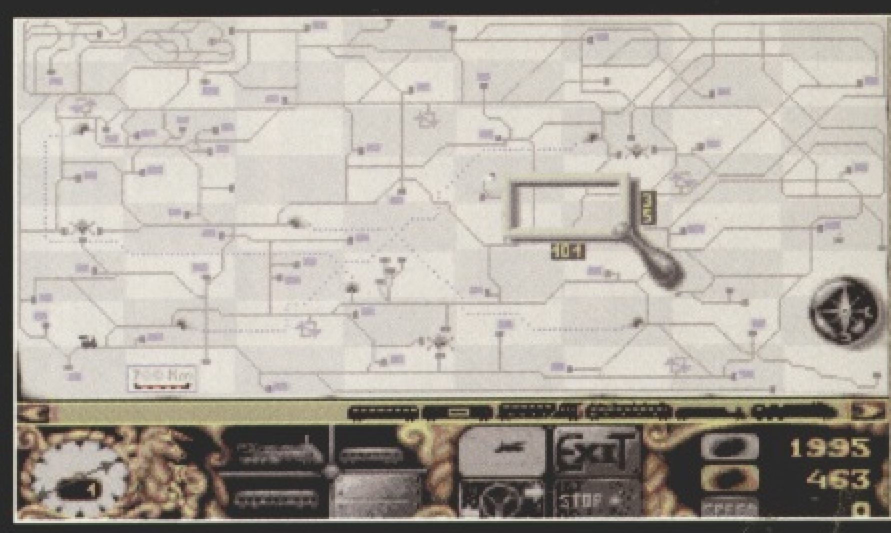
This next bit is quite easy. Just head for the town of Baku, which can be found at map coordinates X-93, Y-43. All you need to do here is pick up a harpoon wagon. There, that wasn't too painful, was it?

CHEATS 'R' US

If you want a little help on your journey, you might find this little cheat very handy indeed. It doesn't make battle easier nor does it make your train any stronger, but it does let you see all the mobile items in the game. Just go to the map screen and hold down the Control and Alt keys, and then click the mouse on the bottom left of the screen. All objects will now be shown, with enemy trains shown in green, wolves in black, nomads in red and mammoths in mauve. What more could you need?



Examine your map, and head for the track ending at X-39, Y-32. You might need to go through some very complicated bits of track to get to it so keep checking your map. Continue through the track ending and it will magically continue. Watch out though, as lots of dead ends will start to show themselves. The safest way to proceed is to stick the rail cars in front of the train and push them. At the end of the maze, you will come to the mammoth's graveyard. If you examine the mausoleum, you will find a five-figure number inscribed on it. Note this number down, and then find your way out of the maze.



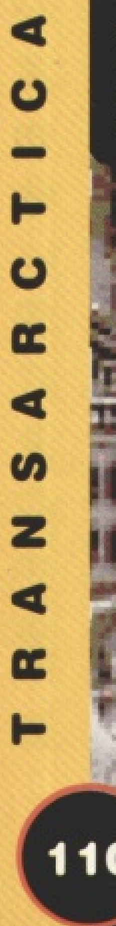
Now head to the north west of the map, where you will find the Lock Ness bridge at map coordinates X-11, Y-10. Wait until the monster that lurks there raises its ugly head and then kill it with the harpoon wagon (by firing the harpoon, not by ramming it!). Now continue on your way and stop when you reach some really complicated tracks leading east.

Unfortunately you have to get to map reference X-34, Y-4, which is on the other side of the tracks leading east. Be very, very, very careful crossing this part of the map, as the network is positively loaded with mines. Send out rail cars to take out the mines and work through the maze and then move through yourself. You can either repair the rails as you follow the cars through or look for the one remaining route that lets you get through without crossing any damaged rails.

At X-34, Y-4 you'll reach the sentry town. When asked, enter the five-digit code you noted down in the mammoth's graveyard and you will be given a Geiger counter. Very useful indeed.

To use the Geiger counter you just have to look at the neck of the General in the headquarters, as that is where it is kept. The needle will move depending on where you are, and you want to get it to its maximum setting, otherwise you won't be able to find the Tchenobyl factory. Just for your information the area with maximum radiation is in the box X-61, Y-16 to X-70, Y-28.

Send a spy into the centre of the area, near the forest at the map coordinates X-65, Y-20. When he gets there, he will send you a message telling you that he has reached and entered the enemy factory. Request very nicely but

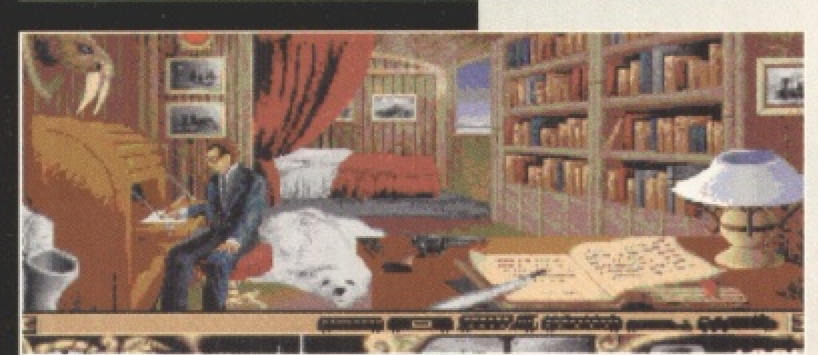




firmly that he blow it up, which he will. This small action will open up the path to the Himalayas.

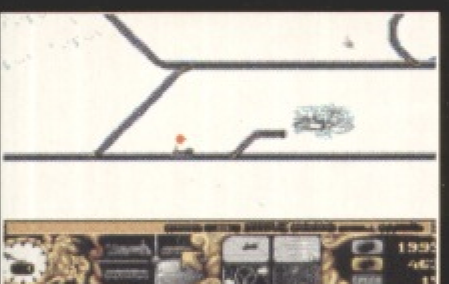
At this point you will need to be making tracks for the town of Omsk, which is way off to the north-east. As you travel there you will come to a drawbridge, at map coordinates X-110, Y-33. Unfortunately, you can only cross it between the hours of 12 and 2pm, so you may have to wait. The only way to cross is to wait until midday, and then charge at full speed over the bridge.





From here to Omsk is a very complicated route, so once again refer to your map and try to build up a rough route. Watch out for the wolves that attack along the way and before too long you should reach the town, at which point you should buy yourself a cauldron.

Finally, you need to climb the Himalayas. Go to the track ending at X-15, Y-68 and keep going. A hidden path will open into the mountains. Make sure you are carrying loads of coal, as the fuel consumption in this part of the game is very high. Before too long you will come face to face with your enemy - the Minotaur - and it will help a great deal if you have collected a good few soldiers and weapons by this point. Defeat the Minotaur, and the way ahead will be clear for you to ride into the mountains and into the end of the game!



TOWNIES AND RUSTICS

There are a fair few towns to be explored in Transarctica, and it would no doubt be a great help if you knew what to expect in each one. That's why we're going to tell you.

First off there are the commercial towns, which are: Kuwait, Babylon, Helsinki, Copenhagen, Gorki, Krasnojarsk, London, Amsterdam, Kiev, Saratov, Paris, Turin, Sebastopol, Istanbul, Granada, Tunis, Athens, Marrakesh, Iaoudeni, Tibesti, Djirgalanf.

Then you have your information towns. For your information, they are: Bayreuth, Machad, Rome, Alexandria, Mont Saint-Michel, Delhi, Canossa.

For collecting soldiers, you'll need to go to the barracks towns, otherwise known as: Abu-Dhabi, Tashkent, Moscow, Sparta and Berlin. Mammoths can be found in Casablanca, Bhopal and Temir Tau while slaves can be found in Setov and Luxor.

Last but not least come the factory towns. Each is listed here, along with the products they provide:

In-Salah - Bio-greenhouse tender wagon, small goods, machine gun, tanker, small prison, small barracks, livestock wagon.

Rhur - Small watchtower, large barracks, large goods, tanker, tender, large prison, crane, oil tanker.

Omsk - Cauldron, tender, small barracks, large prison, small goods.

Gdansk - Missile-launching wagon, large barracks, small barracks, cannon, machine gun, deluxe spy wagon, livestock wagon.

New Peking - Large watchtower, tender, large barracks, small prison, large goods, cannon.

Rhum - Mountain-digging wagon.

Baku - Harpoon wagon, bio-greenhouse wagon, refrigeration wagon, deluxe spy wagon, oil tanker, tanker, tender, livestock wagon.

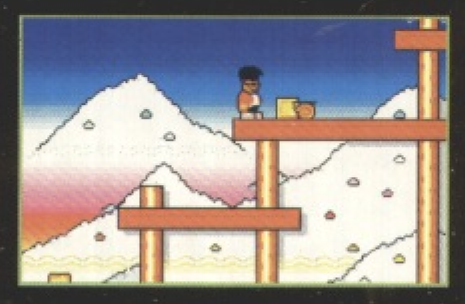


SNIP TIPS

Way-hay! Seeing as how Europe is 'in', I've decided to kick off your favourite page with some foreign words, so here goes. Herzlich willkommen bei Snip Tips, dem Teil des Magazins dem ich schreibe, which is German for 'Heartily welcome to Snip Tips, the part of the magazine that I write'. If you want to get in on the act then send all your top hints and cheats to me, Mr Tips, at: THE ONE, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. Remember, the best ones will win a software prize!

McDONALDS LAND
Virgin Games

Those two MC Kids may have just appeared in their second Amiga outing, but their first wasn't exactly a pushover. If you are having problems retrieving Ronald McDonald's magic bag then here's a well-crafty cheatmode. Just type in SPICY BEANBURGER (with space) on the title screen and you'll be bestowed with infinite lives.



A-TRAIN
Ocean

Nicholas Pride from Rotherham made me promise that I wouldn't take the rise out of his surname and because he sent me this excellent cheat for Ocean's not-so-excellent Sim Train I'm not going to. Simply type in CHEATERCHEATERWIMP during the main game and you'll be magically awarded loads and loads of cash.

LIONHEART
Thalion

After our extensive player's guide, penned by the programmers themselves, no less, you would have thought that we'd given you all the help you need to sail through Thalion's superb hack-'n'-slash-'em-up. Well, no - the best is yet to come and it's all thanks to Timo Clasen from Germany. Cheers matey!

To gain infy lives just play the game as normal, crouch down and press 'P'. Then hold CTRL and HELP down until the screen shakes. Voila! More lives than you could possibly wave a hat at.

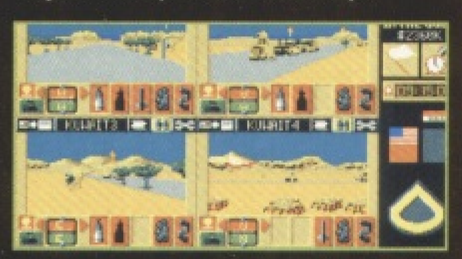
But there's more. According to Timo, pressing CTRL anytime during play will make Vladyn fly, although you have to control him with your mouse.



WAR IN THE GULF
Empire

If you're really interested in getting somewhere in Empire's sexy tank sim, forget the long-winded guide on beginning on page 106 - this is where the action is.

Make your way to the filing screen, type in (rather cleverly, methinks) Let me cheat!, in upper and lower case as shown with spaces and exclamation mark, click on the Reset button and you'll be able to choose to begin from any of the squares on the map.



ROBOCOD (A1200)
Millennium

The enhanced James Pond 2 received a more-than-favourable welcome last month but it's larger than usual amount of levels might be causing some frustration - after all, what's the point of attaching extra levels to the back of a game if an average gamer finds them too hard to reach?

If that is the case and you're simply gagging to see the end of the game then gag no more - I've got just the cheat for you. Just type O.S. FRIENDLY (programmer gag, that) on the title screen, remembering to include both full stops and the space before 'Friendly' and play the game as normal. Then, when you feel like having a sneaky cheat, simply press 'M' at any time and a special menu will appear. Enter a number between 1 and 55 to be whisked to that level. Marvellous!

CHEAPOS SNIP TIPS!

We haven't tipped budget games for a long while so let's make amends - you'll find loads of cheats for some golden oldies right here, right now.

FANTASY WORLD DIZZY
Codemasters

Enter IMMORTAL on the high score table for infinite lives

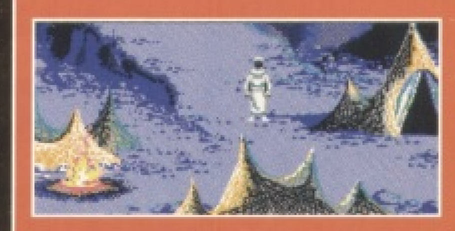
FINAL FIGHT
Kixx

When the picture of the Mayor and the TV appears, press the HELP key just after it reads 'not so fast, turn on the TV'. You should now find yourself invincible. If that doesn't work, try pausing the game and typing SHERIFF FATMAN. Okay?

HEROQUEST
GBH

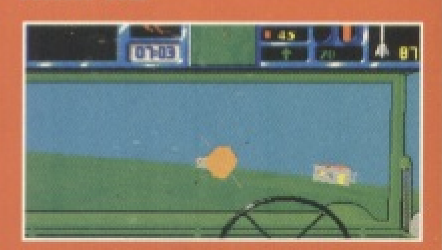
To obtain the artifacts easily, enter the mission and find the artifact. Next, make a quick gateway and then get someone else to stroll back and pick the artifact up.

LOOM
Kixx XL



Listen carefully to the Guild of Glassmakers. They cast spells which you can hear and copy for your own use.

FLAMES OF FREEDOM
Kixx XL



To gain control of all the 41 Islands, it's only necessary to capture the following: Lobos, Ndola, Camargo, Makat, Dhafia, Ghazal, Djoum, Satara.

SKY HIGH STUNTMAN
Codemasters

Type CHEAT on the title screen for infinite lives and bullets.

TERMINATOR 2
The Hit Squad

Pause the game, then press F1, F2, F3, F4... and so on, up to F10. Then unpause the game and by pressing Escape you can skip though the levels.



GAMES SURGERY

tried

Being dead professional, Matt The Medic plops on his trusty stethoscope and asks you to breathe deeply while he cups you gently in his hands. Once he's finished doing that he may well answer some of your questions, if you're lucky.

Dear Matt The Medic,
I would like some help on THE SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND (don't laugh) as although I can get the monkey head key I don't know what to do next. Please help.
James Mullarky,
Manchester.

Dear Matt,
On THE SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND I don't seem to be able to obtain the navigator's head but when I talk to the cannibals they say they don't know how to get another one. Please tell me how to get it and how to use it in the catacombs.
Stephen Craycraft,
Rainham, Kent.

I wonder of Lucasarts knew what they were getting me into when they wrote Monkey Island. I hate them deeply. Well, here we go again...

I believe that after giving the idol to the cannibals and the banana picker to Herman, you should use Herman's key in the monkey head's ear. You can now return to the cannibals and get the head of the navigator.

Once you have it you should go into the monkey's head and keep looking at the head of the navigator to find your way to the ghost ship. If you still can't get the head of the navigator, I would suggest that you haven't solved all the previous puzzles.

Dear Doc,
I have two old games which are driving me crazy because they are so difficult: THE SHADOW OF THE BEAST and XENON. I have got fairly far on both of them, but they are just unbelievably difficult. Please help.
Ian Reid,
Dublin, Ireland.

Haven't heard from these old gents for a while. Okay, Shadow first: When the beast title screen appears, hold down both mouse buttons and fire on your joystick until prompted for disk two. Huzzah! - you should now have infinite lives. Alternatively you can wait for the end of the intro sequence (where the creature reaches out for the word 'Beast') then press and hold fire and the left mouse button, and wait for the disk two prompt. Once again I say 'Huzzah!' - infinite lives are yours, my son.

I don't have any nice and simple cheats for XENON but try this. Let yourself be killed on Level 2: Stage 2, and all the aliens in the round will be destroyed. Also in Level 2, kill the first guardian and then crash into the first available wall. When play restarts there shouldn't be any aliens for quite a while. Good luck.

Dear Doc,
I am in need of some desperate medical attention. My problem is LEISURE SUITE LARRY 2 - I'm stuck on the cruise liner and don't know how to get off. Please help me because this one drives me up the wall and into insanity.
Jesper Nielsen,
Copenhagen, Denmark.

Wonderful, wonderful, Copenhagen. Well, this follows on from the pool scene with the bikini (hopefully). Go back to your cabin and wear your leisure suit then save your game before entering the next room. Open the night stand drawer and quickly take out the sewing kit and leave. Head for the bridge and move the switch on the right hand side without attracting the captain's attention. This should set off the alarm so head for the lifeboat and jump in - when the boat is in the water, wear the wig. Use the sunscreen (always wise) and eat the spinach dip and in ten days you should arrive at the beach. Ta-dah!

MATT'S SHOW-OFF SHELF

Every now and then even I have to reach for a special shelf in the medicine cabinet. Starting this month I'm inviting you - yes, you - to join my special team of dedicated nurses and asking you to help cure those poor unfortunates that I personally have not been able to rid of their terrible afflictions. If you know the answers to any of these long-standing problems write to: 'MATT'S SHOW-OFF SHELF' at the normal Games Surgery address. Right, with that let's have a look at the patient's medical records.

MEDICATION REQUIRED

- Dominic Udoney from Northumberland has a large problem regarding the killing of snakes and rescuing of Kate Lomax in HEART OF CHINA.
- Helen Jackson of Durham is desperately in need of a cheat for McDONALDS LAND.
- Crazzy Mazzy is stuck trying to kill the monsters on level three of THE BLACK CRYPT. He has the mask of second sight from the fourth level but can't get past the nasties.
- Richard Burke from Nottingham has been told to meet a man in the park in OPERATION STEALTH but even though he has coins and a red carnation in his collar, the park is always deserted.
- David from Southport has offered to sell his car if anyone can produce a cheat for infinite boosts in CRAZY CARS 3.

Dear Doc,
Please help me. I am going mad in the LEGEND OF KYRANDIA. I still don't know how to get the red, yellow and blue gem from Faeriewood. Your solution says to retrace your steps but I've this and haven't had much luck. Help!
Richard Hollis,
Rayleigh, Essex.

A fellow Essex man - good show. The nice thing about KYRANDIA is that it will never let you get rid of things that you ultimately need, so if you can't find an object or gem, just keep walking around the land and you will find that objects will just appear in the various locations. Use a map if possible and be patient.

THE SURGERY IS NOW CLOSED!

Yes, it's time for me to hang up my stethoscope for another month. Don't forget that I love you all and, if you are in need of my guidance, send your problems to: Matt the Medic, Games Surgery, THE ONE, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. Please don't send any SAEs or phone in as unfortunately I can't answer your queries personally.

BACK ISSUES



Being a person of discerning taste you are no doubt a regular reader of The One, the bible of all that's tops in the heady world of Amiga games. But even so there may well be embarrassing gaps in your collection. Maybe you didn't start reading The One until recently, or perhaps you didn't start reading at all until recently or maybe the newsagent simply ran out of stock - in which case why didn't you place an order?

Whatever, here's your chance to fill in those gaping voids in your magazine-related life. Below you'll find listed all those lovely issues of The One stretching back to May of last year, complete with detailed descriptions of their contents. Be warned that many of them have sold out - we're just so damn popular!

To order simply pick the issue(s) you want, fill in the coupon below, write out a cheque or postal order for the required amount and send it off to: The One Back Issues Dept, Tower Publishing, Sovereign Place, Lathkill Street, Market Harborough LE16 9EF. For more information call: (0858) 468811.









MAY 1992
ON THE DISKS! Playable demos of Fire & Ice and The Humans, an interactive Bullfrog interview plus three excellent PD games: Yelp!, Microbes and Asteroids!
WIPPED! Sabre Team, Aquatic Games, Shadoworlds and The Humans!
REVIEWED! Indy IV arcade game, Project-X, Eye of the Beholder 2, Fire & Ice, Apidya and many more!
TIPPED! Complete solutions to Heimdall and Willy Beamish, a player's guide to Robocop 3 and the start of the Shadowlands guide!
PLUS! The Magnificent Seven! The ultimate Amiga! Two free badges!

JUNE 1992
ON THE DISKS! Playable demos of Indy IV arcade game, Pushover and Striker, F1GP cheats plus two PD games: Team 17's Waggle-O-Mania and Galaxians!
WIPPED! Premiere, Zool, Galactic and Rookies!
REVIEWED! Sensible Soccer, Jaguar XJ220, Floor 13, The Addams Family, Wizkid and many more!
TIPPED! Complete player's guides to Harlequin and F1GP and the second part of the Shadowlands solution!
PLUS! Team 17 interviewed plus preview round-up! Free Ocean badge!

JULY 1992
ON THE DISKS! Playable demos of Red Zone and Galactic plus FIVE complete PD games: Battlements, Dragon Tiles, MegaTron, Omega Race and Hollywood Trivia!
WIPPED! Lotus 3, Wing Commander and The Carl Lewis Challenge!
REVIEWED! Lure of the Temptress, Monkey Island 2, Ishar, Striker, Championship Manager and many more!
TIPPED! Player's guides to Parasol Stars, Epic, John Madden Football and Eye of the Beholder 2!
PLUS! The One games challenge! Free Dune poster!

AUGUST 1992
ON THE DISKS! Playable demos of Troddlers and California Games 2, extra missions for Epic plus three PD games: Wizzy's Quest, Duel and Match Patch!
WIPPED! Walker, Nigel Mansell, Curse of Enchantia and Frontier: Elite 2!
REVIEWED! Civilization, Hoi, Crazy Cars 3, Liverpool, California Games 2 and many more!
TIPPED! Player's guides to Sensible Soccer, Striker, Space Crusade and Fire & Ice, and the start of the complete Monkey Island 2 solution!
PLUS! Renegade interviewed! The start of the Uridium 2 development diary!

SEPTEMBER 1992
ON THE DISKS! Playable demos of Premiere, Tiny Skweeks and Match of the Day, Flashback preview and three PD games: War, Nebula and Croak!
WIPPED! Second Samurai, Flashback and more on Frontier: Elite 2!
REVIEWED! Premiere, MegaTraveller 2, Guy Spy, Fascination, Shadow of the Best 3 and many more!
TIPPED! Player's guides to Graham Taylor, Civilization and Fire & Ice (pt 2) and the on-going complete solution to Monkey Island 2!

OCTOBER 1992
ON THE DISKS! Three disks this month, containing playable demos of Assassin, KGB and Fireforce plus 2 PD games: Cybernetix and Sub Attack!
WIPPED! The Chaos Engine, Legends Of Valour and the final instalment of Frontier: Elite 2!
REVIEWED! Putty, The Humans, Aquatic Games, Lotus 3, Zool, Troddlers and many more!
TIPPED! Guides to Dune and Lure of the Temptress, the start of a complete solution to Eye of the Beholder 2 and the last part of the Monkey Island 2 solution!
PLUS! Those end-game sequences revealed! Westwood Studios interviewed!

NOVEMBER 1992
ON THE DISKS! Playable demos of The Chaos Engine and Lionheart plus five PD games: Revolution, Bridge Ball, Flag Catcher, Biplanes and Tank Attack!
WIPPED! Street Fighter 2, Gunship 2000, Darkmere and Desert Strike!
REVIEWED! Wing Commander, Shadoworlds, Road Rash, Curse of Enchantia, Legend of Kyrandia, Assassin and many more!
TIPPED! Complete solution to Hook and the second part of the Eye of the Beholder solution!
PLUS! Sensible Software interviewed!

DECEMBER 1992
ON THE DISKS! Playable demos of Sensible Soccer V1.1, No Second Prize, McDonalds Land and Creatures plus a preview of Street Fighter 2!
WIPPED! Superfrog, Star Trek and WWF 2!
REVIEWED! Legends of Valour, No Second Prize, McDonalds Land, BC Kid, Nigel Mansell, Lethal Weapon and many more!
TIPPED! Player's guides to Zool, Putty and Wizkid plus the last part of the Eye of the Beholder 2 solution!
PLUS! The A1200 revealed! Richard 'Mr Music' Joseph interviewed!

JANUARY 1993
SOLD OUT
ON THE DISKS! Psycho Game - a complete game specially written for The One by Bullfrog - along with playable demos of Gunship 2000 and Dalek Attack plus a preview of Archer Maclean's Pool!
WIPPED! Microcosm and Dracula on CD, Dune 2 and [illegible]erhero!
REVIEWED! [illegible]hic adventure, S[illegible] Cool World, KGB, W[illegible] and many more!
TIPPED! Player's guides to Assassin and Wing Commander, the start of a complete Legend of Kyrandia solution and a complete solution to Dizzy: Prince of the Yolkfolk!
PLUS! 1993 previewed! The One awards! Stunning Dave Gibbons cover!

FEBRUARY 1993
ON THE DISKS! Playable demos of Darkseed, Universal Monsters and Superhero!
WIPPED! Space Hulk, Chuck Rock 2 and Ambermoon!
REVIEWED! The Chaos Engine, Dragon's Lair 3, WWF 2, Darkseed, Sleepwalker and many more!
TIPPED! Player's guides to Street Fighter 2, Sensisoccer V1.1, Sabre Team and Fireforce plus the on-going Kyrandia solution!
PLUS! Commodore's ex-boss Kelly Sumner interviewed!

MARCH 1993
ON THE DISKS! Playable demos of Superfrog, Flashback, Prime Mover and Woody's World, plus a complete PD game: Oblivion!
WIPPED! Liberation: Captive 2, Woody's World, Ishar 2, Blastar and amny more!
REVIEWED! Body Blows, Lionheart, Flashback, Transarctica, Walker, Lemmings 2 and many more!
TIPPED! Player's guide to Legends of Valour, complete solutions to Indy IV adventure and Future Wars and the last part of the Kyrandia solution!
PLUS! Ten good reasons to buy an A1200! Dino Dini interviewed!

APRIL 1993
ON THE DISKS! Playable demos of FA Premier League (collector's item!), Abandone Places 2 and Beavers, plus two PD games: Transplant and PacMan Deluxe!
WIPPED! Batman Returns, Cyberspace, James Pond 3, The Lost Vikings and many more!
REVIEWED! Superfrog, Arabian Nights, Chuck Rock 2, Abandoned Places 2, Desert Strike and more!
TIPPED! Solutions to Darkseed, Dragon's Lair 3 and Indy III, plus the start of player's guides to KGB and Bill's Tomato Game!
PLUS! X-Wing on Amiga (but it's actually an April Fool's joke)!

MAY 1993
ON THE DISKS! Three bumper disks, boasting playable demos of The Lost Vikings, Legend 2, The Ancient Art of War in the Skies, Sink or Swim and Super Cauldron plus a complete PD game: Balder's Grove!
WIPPED! Syndicate, Overdrive, F-117a Stealth Fighter 2, Soccer Kid and many more!
REVIEWED! B17 Flying Fortress, Beavers, Sink or Swim, Championship Manager '93, Nippon Safes and many more!
TIPPED! Player's guides to Body Blows and Nick Faldo's Golf, more on KGB and Bill's Tomato Game plus the start of a massive Chaos Engine guide!
PLUS! Alien Breed 2 development diary starts! How the mass media covers computer games exposed!

JUNE 1993
ON THE DISKS! Blaster!, a specially-written full game for The One, plus a playable demo of Nippon Safes and two complete PD games: Alien Bash and Tractor Beam!
WIPPED! Bubba 'n' Stix, Realms of Darkness, Innocent Until Caught, Maelstrom and many more!
REVIEWED! Goal!, Super Cauldron, Ancient Art of War in the Skies, Legend 2, The Lost Vikings and many more!
TIPPED! Player's guide to Lionheart and Chuck Rock 2 plus the completion of the solutions to KGB and Chaos Engine!
PLUS! We tell you how to get into the software business!

JULY 1993
ON THE DISKS! Playable demos of Cannon Fodder, Global Gladiators and F1 Challenge, plus a complete PD game: Baldy!
WIPPED! Jurassic Park, Settlers, Stardust, Simon the Sorceror, HeroQuest 2 and many more!
REVIEWED! Ishar 2, War in the Gulf, Dune 2, Gunship 2000, Syndicate and many more!
TIPPED! Complete player's guide to Arabian Nights, Beavers and B17 plus the start of an Abandoned Places 2 solution!
PLUS! Thalion interviewed!

AUGUST 1993
ON THE DISKS! Trex Warrior, a full game from Thalion written specially for The One, plus a playable demo of Ishar 2 and Snakes and a complete PD game: Wibble World Giddy!
WIPPED! Total Carnage, TFX, Beneath the Steel Sky, Utopia 2, Brutal Sports Football and more!
REVIEWED! Deep Core, Sim Life, Whale's Voyage, 1869, Battle Isle '93 and many more!
TIPPED! Player's guide to Dune 2, Gunship 2000 and Reach for the Skies, the Abandoned Places 2 complete solution continues while the World Of Legend solution starts!
PLUS! The CD32 is unveiled! Arnie's raw deal!

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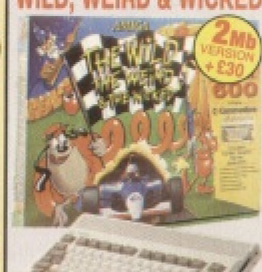
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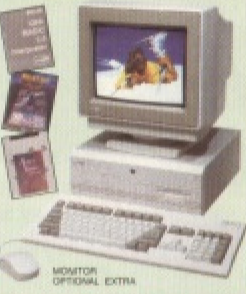
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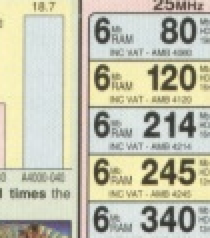
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ALIEN BREED 2



It's only four months into development and already the Alien Breed camp is buzzing with ideas for packaging and teaser ads! Oh, and Starsky and Hutch. Read on...

THE MONTH IN (VERY) BRIEF...

It's been yet another disjointed and strange month of AB2 development, with all sorts of weird and wonderful events taking place. But before all is revealed, let's see just what everyone has been doing.

ANDREAS

Andreas spent the month doing all manner of things. Fortunately Project-X was completed last month so he finally, finally managed to finish off the AB2 map editor. This editor has taken ages but it's well worth the time, as it makes mapping much less of a hassle than it was previously. All the game's maps have to be put together by hand and it's far easier when you've got the right tool for the job.

The new map editor boasts several wonderful features such as the ability to load two maps into memory at once, meaning that we can have a spare map clipscreen consisting of basic building blocks and whip new maps together very quickly. This, I can inform you, is VERY good news indeed as it'll mean more maps in the final game.

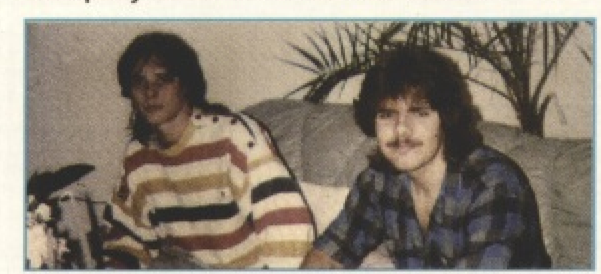
Andreas also ripped the Superfrog code to bits, reworked the scroll routines, wrote a really nice 24-bit colourfade for the AGA version, celebrated his birthday in fine style (happy 22nd by the way, mate) and started work on getting the Alien Breed 2 heroes marching impressively around the screen.

At the end of month Andreas hit a brick wall when a hardware limitation of the A1200 was met but we've managed to dislodge his skull now and overcome the problems. A nod to Dean Ashton at Millennium for confirming our theories on CiX. (Hmmm, absholutely fashinating - Ed.)

Andreas is presently completely disturbed at the notion of me sending a really old picture of him to The One team where he looks like an extra off some 70s show like Starsky and Hutch. Revenge will be sweet or so he reckons... but I've still got a few more ludicrous and strange photos up my sleeve so he'd better behave!



(Below) From left to right it's Rico, Martyn and Andreas enjoying their favourite pastime. Andreas indicates how many bottles he's drunk.



(Above) Embarassing old photo time! This is a piccy of Andreas from a few year's back - look at that hair! And that 'tache!

RICO

Rico spent a few weeks juggling with Imagine2 and Real3D 2 to see if their effects could be used in the AB2 project. I was suprised and impressed that after just a week of meddling the results were excellent - see if you can spot some of these rendered objects in the new graphics.



Armed with the new map editor, Rico has been hard at work mapping out the game's many levels. At the moment these are in rough form, utilising many of the new ideas and twists, and they'll be edited later for the final version. Rico has been a bit glum since his Opalvision card went back so he we went out and got a new 24-bit card (I forget which type) - the problem now is that, unlike the Opalvision, there's no decent software available for it. If anyone knows of a place that'll supply TVPaint then give us a call!

ALLISTER

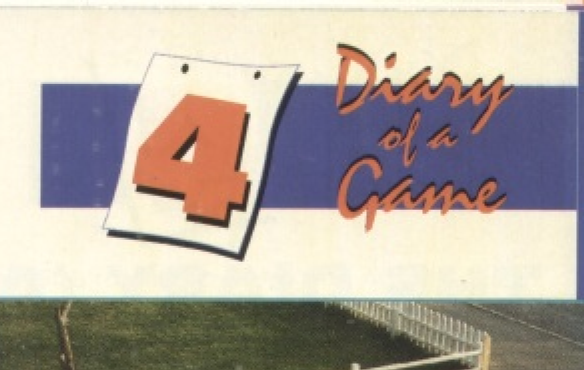
A quiet month for Allister on the AB2 front - he's had no time to do anything this month due to the pressures of doing so much other work. Not to worry though, as we aim to have a big production meeting shortly which'll include Allister. It should see all the game's sound FX sorted and completed within a month. Like the original game, we are hoping to build an awesome atmosphere, very moody and very daunting.

MARTYN



I spent the first two weeks of the month on holiday in the island of Poros in Greece, and mighty bloody fine it was too. I certainly didn't want to come home - two weeks of nothing but glorious 110-120° sun and cheap wine/beer with not a phone or TV, let alone an Amiga, in sight. Despite the heat I still didn't manage to get a tan although I'm a darker shade of white than I was. I did hire a scooter and bezzed about in the mountains for a few days, which was terrific.

Unfortunately time passed extremely quickly and all to soon I had to face the harsh realities of getting back to normal and





the absolutely crap weather that goes with it. It was actually my first REAL holiday in 10 years, believe it or not, and I can't wait until the next - in fact, I'm ready for one already because while I was away the work piled up which meant I've been even busier than I usually am.

Back at work it's been a case of trying to get Overdrive, F17 Challenge (as it's now known), Qwak!, Body Blows PC and Alien Breed PC finished on time, which has left me little breathing space for work on Breed 2... again!

With all these games the 'wolves' (our playtest squad) have had their work cut out recently. Watch out for our forthcoming Qwak! because it's just soooo playable and smart. The wolves have also been getting into Overdrive, which is also jolly playable, even if we did find that 95% of all known reviewers couldn't handle its speed! (We could! - The One boys.)

This month I also had the task of providing you with some lovely (ahem) photos for the diary, as the old ones were wearing a little bit thin and none of us were completely chuffed with them, especially as the geezer who took them used some sort of disfiguring fish-eye lens at about 2 inches away from our faces... not nice. Hope you like them, whichever Dave and the gang decide to use!



AT TEAM 17 H.Q.

This month saw the start of the first box-art ideas coming in from our illustrator, Kev Jenkins. Kev's been working with us since we signed him up at the ECTS in April. His first work for us will be seen on the boxes for F17 and Overdrive, both of which are very, very nice - much better than most of our previous box-art. We've had three sketches submitted and we liked the last one most. We wanted the same alien creature featured on the first box but in a different perspective. The results should be sensational. I hope to have this artwork ready and available for exclusive unveiling in next month's diary!

Apart from that, the marketing team have started getting into gear and - shock, horror - a series of small "teaser" ads is planned for the game... We're not quite ready for full-page ads yet, but it's a start. People might like to realise that apart from a freebie ad we got in another mag, we haven't placed a single advertisement for a Team17 game... Coo. Anyway, on with this month's events.

(Left) See what the pressures of programming can do to a man? At least it earns Andreas enough cash to afford a nice car (shown top).

(Left) Some of the many background blocks being used to map AB2.

(Abobe and right) Some of Rico's gruesome sketches for the dead civilian backgrounds.





THE DIARY (AT LAST)

Friday July 2nd

While Andreas, Rico and co. are left pondering on the next AB2 activities, I jet off to Greece for a well deserved (or so it says here) break in Poros. I arrive at 3.30am Greek local time and was like walking into a sauna, the air was so hot. In the early hours of Saturday morning, myself and my girlfriend arrived at our appartment and forgot all about Rico and Andreas... (insert big, satisfied grin for effect).

Sunday July 4th

While finishing off a glass of ice-cold Retsina, I pop a bundle of postcards into the mailbox to remind everyone that I'm sat in the sun and they're not... I even sent one to Dave, Simon and Matt - too kind by far! (Cheers-ears, you lucky sod! - The One boys.)

Monday July 5th

Back at the Swedish ranch Andreas begins to disembowel the code framework from Superfrog. It's obvious that there's little point sitting and rewriting lots of code all over again and, besides, the scroll routine in Superfrog was an advanced version of the original Alien Breed one anyway. The sprite system was completely overhauled for Superfrog, though, which will mean much meatier action when it's used in AB2 due to the scroll being far slower.

After a few hours, Andreas has a managed to rip all the bits out he wants and he's got a library of routines all ready for the game to be written around. He'll have to do quite a bit more work on the scroll routine as it only handles a finite map size and doesn't handle AGA graphics, but that's his menu of fun and excitement over the next few days.

Rico beavers away mapping out some early civilian block levels of the game. The guys discuss having sections of the game like a fast and furious Commando-style game where aliens fly at you like crazy. This should be easily implemented as we can have maps that are long and thin now (due to the marvels of the map editor).

As for me, well, I'm relaxing on a cruise to the golden sandy beaches of Agistri, swigging Amstel beer and grinning like crazy!

Wednesday July 7th

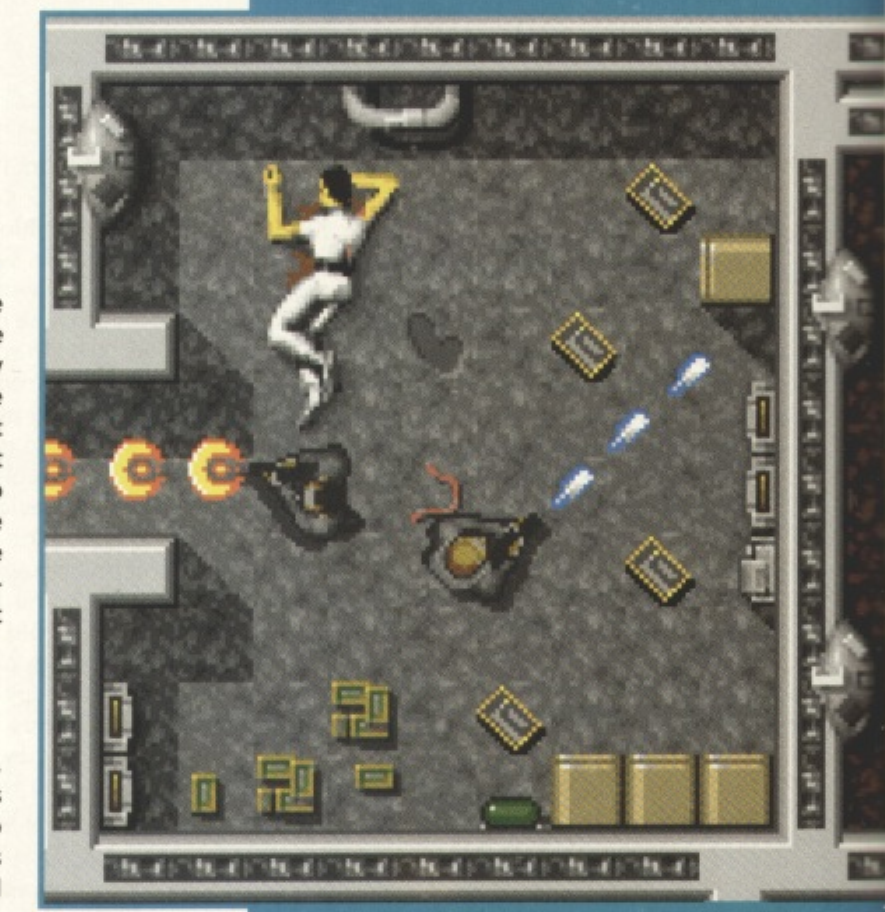
Andreas continues to work on structures ripped out of Superfrog, especially the audio routines which are the result of about 4-5 years of evolutionary coding. Now we've got a great driver that takes up hardly any raster time, takes up less memory, can go in fast or chip ram and can be used perfectly (with a priority system) for sound FX on one or more interuptable channels. This means we can easily mix sound and music in any game, but we prefer to use sound FX only in games like Alien Breed as a moody atmosphere suits it perfectly.

Thursday July 9th

A slightly disgruntled Rico trudges back to his pad with his latest ideas for a level of the game that would see the characters get into a tank-like vehicle and smash their way through a security zone. The reason for the disgruntlement is that Andreas reckoned that he just wouldn't have time to implement the ideas before the deadline hit. Ah well, if we can't do something completely then it's not worth doing at all!

Friday July 9th

Rico buys a flatbed scanner, enabling him to sketch ideas on paper and scan them into his paint package. The result is that everything gets speeded up as he can realise his ideas much quicker! Some examples of scanned drawings should be on these pages. The first roughs to get included in the scanning process were the disembodied civvy workers lying scattered around the complex. Unfortunately we don't think we can keep them in as the ELSPA (European Leisure Software Publishers Association) directives say that they do not condone such gratuitously violent graphic images... Me? I say it's a load of old bol...





Saturday July 10th

Andreas spends the weekend reworking the scroll routine. The new routine needs to allow flexible map sizes and scroll speeds. The routine in Superfrog only had a set size and speed, as did each of the earlier games we produced. Andreas struggled away right through the night but emerged triumphant, if a little bleary eyed, in the early hours of Sunday morning. Now we can have large outdoor maps, some small indoor ones and fast paced Commando-style maps in AB2! Good work that Swede!

Monday July 12th

Andreas got himself into a spot of trouble with the scroll as the routine has to reserve enough raster time to cater for it running at maximum speed. This isn't good because the routine should only ever take the raster time that it needs and not what it possibly might need if it was running flat out. Andreas's headache starts.

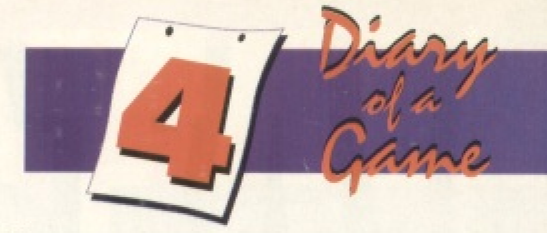
Wednesday July 14th

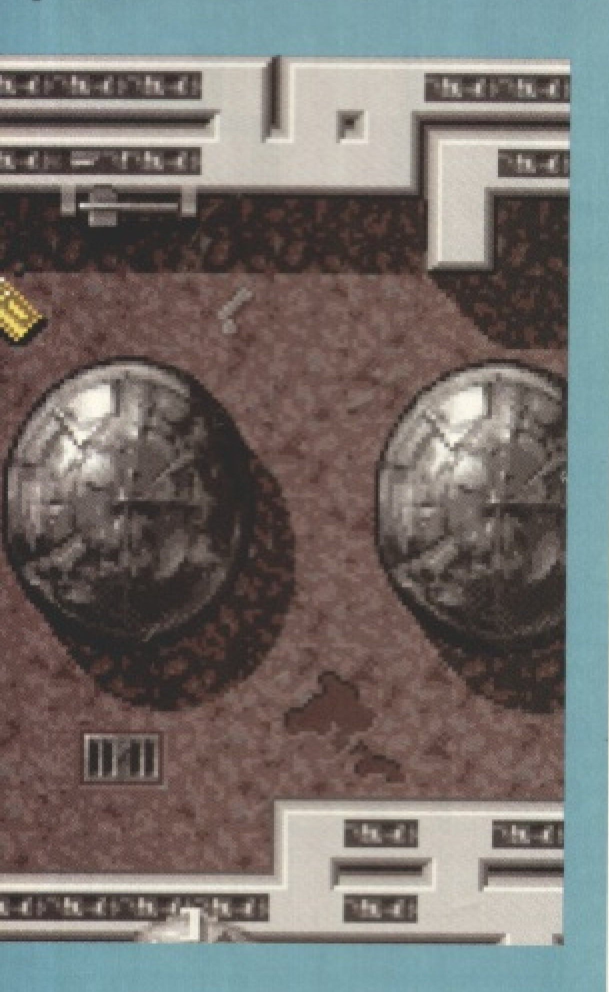
Two furious days later and the scroll routine is behaving perfectly, taking only as much raster time as necessary to do the job in hand. It's also able to go in any direction and at any speed. Luvvly-jubbly. A wrecked Andreas crawls into his bed after working 48hrs flat out... Cut to picture of Martyn lying on the beach swigging a tall, cool drink in the lovely sun.

Thursday July 15th

Apart from some system routines Andreas hasn't taken that much of a good look at the new AGA









hardware. Armed with the hardware specs and an inquiring mind he digs in. The first thing to do is to get all the scroll and BOB routines running happily in 7 or 8 bitplanes (128/256 colours). Easy... Took a couple of hours... Right, let's pop that up on screen and have a look at it... GURU. Erm, well, maybe let's not. At least, not yet.

Friday July 16th

Me and my girlfriend Katrina pack our bags and head for Athens airport after 14 wonderful stress-free days. The whole of Greece sighs a relief that the nutter on the scooter is leaving the country. Me? I shed a tear, if only because I'll never see Gertie, the 50cc Automatic Scooter I hired, ever again... sniff. Pick up lots of little bottles of Uzo for the office lot and the wolves, plus some cheap Greek brandy for my parents. Leave the sun and head back to the miserable weather back home.

But not before taking in the "Spectacular sound and light show" at the Acropolis. If you're ever there give it a miss! Okay, so the Acropolis is pretty well smart but this sound and light show is completely crap. It's just a scratchy old record of Richard Burton and his mates garbling on about ancient Greek soldiers while some sad Greek shines his torch up at the ruins. Highly interesting I don't think - and I paid money to see it! Me and the girlfriend play "spot the pillocks" for a while and everyone points at us.

Saturday July 17th

In the early morning (7.30am) we arrive back at Manchester airport. Unfortunately, we still had shorts and T-shirts on (it was 120° when we left Greece) and it was about 50° and raining in Manchester. All the same it's nice to be home, although Manchester isn't right cracking.

Sunday July 18th

It's Andreas's 22nd birthday. I called him up to say I'd got back and wish him happy birthday. A semi-concious Swede answered the phone but due to the unintelligble utterences I guessed it was Andreas and he'd begun celebrating rather early so I hung up, preferring to speak to him when he'd rejoined the rest of the universe.

Monday July 19th

I'm back at work and staring at the pile of work that has built up. Despite Mr Hangover knocking on his door Andreas recovered by finally getting the scroll/BOB routines to work with AGA graphics, blaming himself for never ever coding the facility into the routine when it was first written.

Wednesday July 21st

It's raining very heavily in Wakefield and I'm sat here all gloomy, dreaming of endless beaches, warm sunshine, top-less women and cheap beer (and, of course, you Katrina, if you're reading)... It's not fair - I want to go back to Greece. I spend the next week in the same gloom as there's lots of work and hardly any time to do it in. Simon from The One calls me up, trying the agony aunt routine, but it fails.

Meanwhile, Andreas optimizes all the update routines for BOBs, scroll, etc., and begins work on a rather dishy 16-million colour fading routine. Rico is still rushing around like a mad man trying to get a decent 24-bit paint package for his new graphics board, without success.

Thursday July 22nd

Andreas's 24-bit colour-fade routine works great, leaving him with a smug grin on his face. "Cor, it's much better than I thought it would be!" he says. Sad how a 22-year-old man can get giddy at the prospect of perfectly smooth 24-bit fades. His next step is to replace all the old 12-bit colour fades with the new code - this will not and does not take long.

Saturday July 24th

Andreas begins ripping the old hero control routine from Alien Breed. The control worked well in the game but getting it to behave in the new code framework is another task altogether! Bits of it needed tweaking though as we thought it took a wee bit too long to twist around from one direction to the opposite. Speeded that up and popped it into the code - it won't be too long before we have guys running around under control.

Tuesday July 27th

Have a crash on the way over to see the guys doing the PC development! Poor Craig (one of the Wolves who took me) had his VW Beetle badly dented in the accident. We survived, though - good job really!

Wednesday July 28th

Andreas began work on the new hero animation. There will be four different characters, with screen-independent 16 colours each (which looks MUCH better than Breed 1). Animation has been improved too and the results are looking great.

NEXT MONTH

Okay, that wraps up another turbulent month of development. Things are gathering pace now and next month should see the first moving demos of the new characters in action. See ya'all next month!

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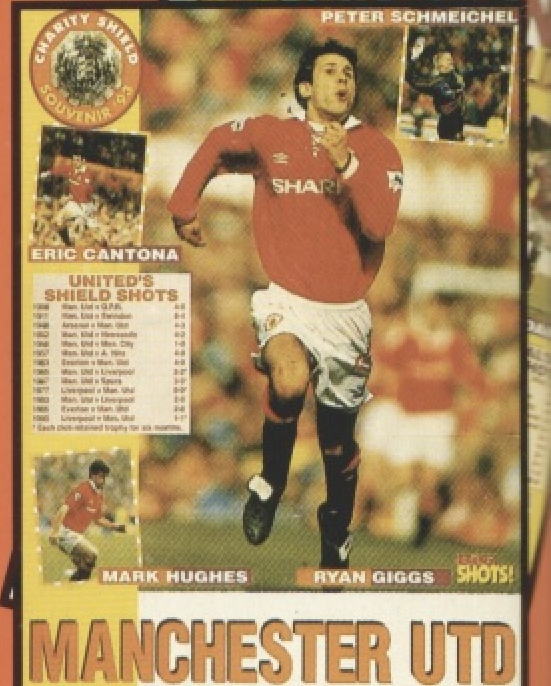
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Long gone are those 'new boy' days as well and truly broken-in pro Matt Broughton sits elegantly in his best PD chair, smiles with a boyish glint and introduces you to some of his closest friends - PD, PD and his brother, err, PD. Yes, you're not wrong, it's time for PD. (Nice intro - Ed.) Thanks Dave.

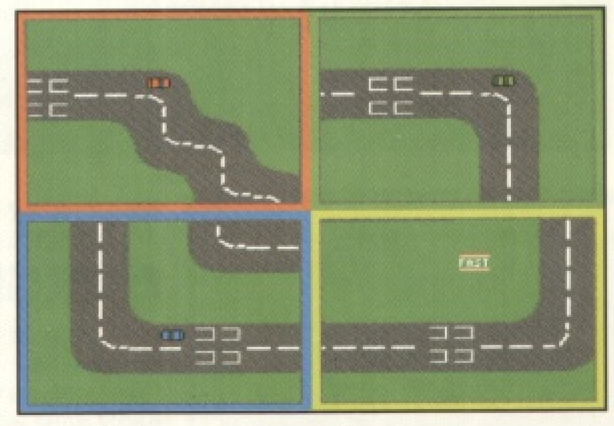


SUPER SKODA CHALLENGE

Fortiss PD,
Assassin disk 94.

Picture, if you will, a sexy speed machine bristling with weapons and performance-enhancing gadgets created by a technologically-advanced engineer. Right, now clear that image from your mind and instead think of a dodgy, tin-plated piece of crap that just about manages to get from your house to Sainsburys without overheating twice. Oh yeah, and with a gun glued to the radiator. Yes, this is the legend that is... Super Skoda Challenge.

If you're looking for slick graphics and a 'pumping' soundtrack then you'd best go elsewhere, but if you're looking for japes and chuckles you've come to the right place. You'll need four mates to get the best out of this game as the screen is split into four quadrants (are there any other sort of quadrants?) with each Skoda given it's own starting place on the overall map area. The purpose here is simple - shoot the other cars while staying on the road and avoiding any obstacles that may come your way.

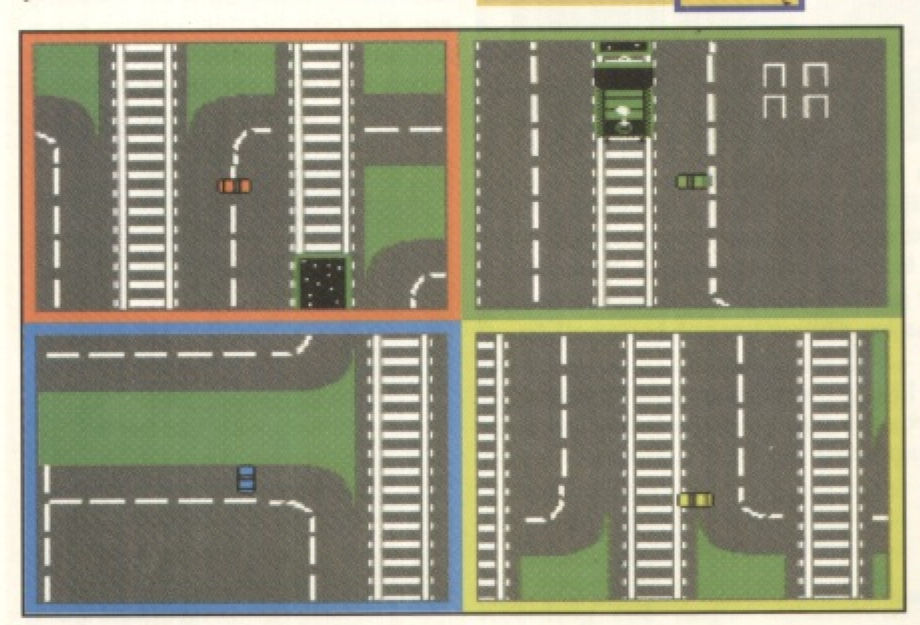


There are ten separate maps for you to trundle around in the way that only Skodas are able to, while your pals do the same thing trying to hunt you down and blow you away. The maps aren't too big and with four cars on the road it doesn't take long to get behind one of your opponents and gun them down.

There are a random number of pick-ups that drift across the screen which, when collected, can do anything from speeding your car up to giving you shields. There are unfortunately some nasty icons that will kill you immediately - and these always seem to be the ones that are heading straight for you!

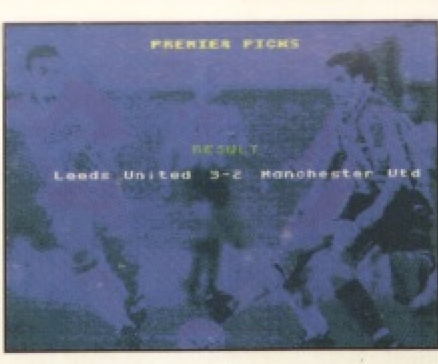
I must also mention the editor that comes with the game as it really adds to the fun, giving you the option to build your own tracks from scratch, putting in as many nasty corners and bends as you want, not to mention putting in railway tracks and the trains that come with them. Simple but good fun, especially if you've got friends round.

OVERALL 67%



PREMIER PICKS

Fortiss PD,
Assassin disk 95.



Never mind your football manager programs or your realistic overhead footy sims, this is the sort of footy game that I can really get my teeth into. It requires no knowledge of the basics of football, no interest in the managerial aspects of football - in fact, the gameplay really has nothing to do with football at all! Splendid.

Just watch as the computer lays out a grid of playing cards three down by six along and then turn them over. That's it really. The only thing that I haven't mentioned so far is that on the reverse of each card are terms that you wouldn't generally find anywhere apart from on a large green field commonly known as a 'pitch'.

Yes, football meets 'game of chance' in this beautifully-presented PD footy game where you compete with the computer to select the best cards on the table. If you're lucky you may get a goal, a free kick (i.e. another selection) or a penalty which allows you the chance to find as many goal cards as possible in a few seconds. If you're not so lucky you might get a near miss (accompanied by a superb "Oh, that was a tremendous effort" sample) or even foul a player, allowing the computer to take two free picks as compensation.

This goes on until one of you picks the half- or full-time icon, then it's time to see how the other teams did in their league matches and finally take a look at the overall table. Substitution cards are the only things that haven't been mentioned yet (allowing fresh cards onto the table) but other than that it really is as simple as it sounds - not to mention good fun. This is great little time waster and one of the better presented PD offerings both graphically and sonically - and you can't argue with that.



OVERALL 81%

FRUIT SALAD

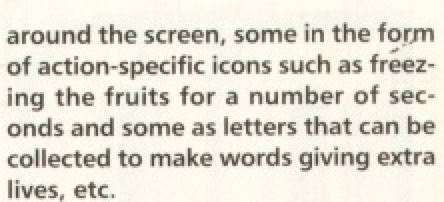
PD Soft,
Assassin disk 102.

All was well in Blobville. The sun was shining and the blobs were enjoying their normal pastime - jumping - when suddenly the skies turned black as the evil Triax descended upon them. With a crackle of power he turned all the

blobs into mindless pieces of fresh fruit given the task of protecting his many jewels. His only mistake was that he missed one blob - a spunky young tyke by the name of Brewster, who sets out to retrieve the jewels and thus set his people free.

It all sounds bad enough to be a commercial release but it is in fact a lovely little platformer out on PD. As Brewster it's your task to collect all the jewels from each of a number of screens made up of platforms, deadly spikes and, of course, your former mates, now nasty pieces of fruit. The fruits aren't that intelligent and will ignore you while repeating their set guard patterns so you must use your natural gift of jumping to avoid the bad guys while collecting the jewels around the screen.

Bonuses will appear at random

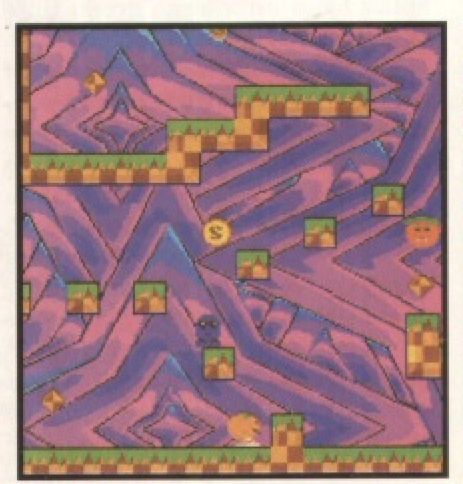


around the screen, some in the form of action-specific icons such as freezing the fruits for a number of seconds and some as letters that can be collected to make words giving extra lives, etc.

There's not much more to the game in honesty but it's all a heap of fun and has a lot of atmosphere due to the excellent sampled sounds that attack you fairly regularly, along with the quirky graphics and nasty backgrounds - you'll have to see it to really get the full vomit-inducing effect.

It's all nice and simple and relies mainly on timing and positioning for jumps and jewel collecting, so take that and have a jolly old time.







MORE ASSASSINS THAN A NINJA HOLIDAY!

More compilation action thanks to the good folks at 17 Bit Software, Fortiss PD and Magnetic Fields.

ASSASSIN DISK 92

BILL: Interesting mixture of golf and snooker for two players! Good.
OBLIDOX: Puzzle arcade game. Push blocks into their corners while avoiding or shooting aliens. Okay.
SOLITAIRE SAMPLER: Seen here before. Nicely presented card games.
OVERALL: 68%

ASSASSINS DISK 94

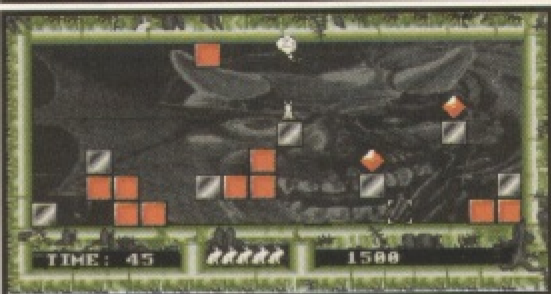
WIBBLE WORLD GIDDY: Needs no introduction on these pages. Stunning PD.
MECHAMOID: Very weird Asteroid clone with some disturbingly strange samples.
SUPER SKODA CHALLENGE: Simply super, check out the main review.
SKODA EDITOR: Fun utility for the above game.
OVERALL: 90% (The best PD disk I've had the pleasure of reviewing - Matt).

ASSASSINS DISK 95

PREMIER PICKS: Very professional indeed. See main review for more details.
TANGLE: Four-player, single-screen lightbike game. Doesn't look too smart but probably fun with four mates.

WHITE RABBITS

All CLR Licenceware dealers, disk CLG 13.



Be verwy qwiet, I'm hunting wabbit. Well, that's not true - actually I'm trying to save wabbits, er, rabbits.

This is another superb puzzler from Andrew Campbell who created Paradox (81% last issue), only this time featuring some lovely little rabbits that have to be guided to the exit on each level. This is achieved using blocks that can be moved to provide stepping stones for the little love. The only problem with this is that not all the blocks can be moved in quite the way you would probably want - some being restricted to vertical movement only, some being restricted to horizontal.

Another problem is that the blocks will not stop unless they hit a wall or another block. This is where logical thinking comes into play as you have to move irrelevant blocks so that they will stop your main pieces where you want them to go.

The first few levels are pretty straightforward, but later you will be required to perform 'simple' tasks before the exit will appear. These might be to pick up a number of jewels or to collect a number of alarm clocks (thus providing you with the time necessary to complete the level). Hazards appear as you progress in the form of blocks with pistons above as well as electrified blocks. You need to avoid sending bunny off towards walls or static blocks as he doesn't react too well to being squashed or crushed under other blocks!

The game has three levels of difficulty and includes a Lemmings-like password system to avoid going over the same screens. It's all very well presented throughout with the graphics being compact but cute, with some nice digitised backgrounds and sweet animations while the sound has a few spot tunes and some good sampled affects.

This is another excellent game that can't really be faulted at PD price - don't delay, buy today.

OVERALL 82%

BILLY BURGLAR

PD Soft, disk 2650.

Nice and simple this one and not badly done either. Billy Burglar is trying to escape from prison and only one obstacle stands between him and freedom - the searchlights. In each screen Billy has to survive for a set period of time without getting caught in the glare of the lights. If they get him well and truly lit then it's out with the guns and arm by arm Billy gets blasted away.

There are a number of static platforms that Billy can make use of as the lights home in towards him



BOP AND PLOP: Average SEUCK product with some interesting sound effects.
PREMIER MANAGER: Text-based footy management game. Okay but not very inspiring.
OVERALL: 74% (Mostly due to Premier Picks)

ASSASSINS DISK 96

DUNGEON FLIPPER: Strange German pinball game with a unique spin on the laws of gravity.
BACKGAMMON: Very nicely presented conversion of the boardgame. Quite quick.
TUMBLE TOTS: Slightly sick but good old LCD-style fun with bouncing babies and buildings on fire.
RASTERBIKE: Very atmospheric lightbike game with split screen for one or two players. Good sound.
OVERALL: 67%

ASSASSIN DISK 97

BUNNY BLAST: Very sick but quite funny. 'Operation Wolf' but with wittle furwy wabbits. Arr, how cute... ker-splat! Ah ha-ha-ha-ha!
MUTANTS FROM MARS: Overhead puzzle game. Try and get the aliens to crash into each other while collecting diamonds. You know the sort of thing.
NEW STUBB CITY: 3D Construction Kit game. Stalk round a mini version of New York and kill people. A tad slow.
OVERALL: 54%

ASSASSINS DISK 98

NESTOR: Nicely-presented Solitaire. Erm... that's it really.
THE PHONE COMPANY: Interesting puzzle offering. Connect the phone network with limited supplies. That sort of thing.
SKYCHASE: Fly above the city and shoot things. Wow. Won't get you writing excited postcards home.
OVERALL: 61%

ASSASSIN DISK 99

ORG: Excellent Connect 4/Noughts & Crosses variation. Good presentation.
SPACEWARS: Okay little two-player head to head. Feels a bit 'Asteroid-y'.
GRIBBIT: Nice-looking and original cartoony game. See main review.
PARAHEMMOT: Strange one, this. Space invaders with you on the ground shooting paratroopers as they descend. Nothing to write home about.
OVERALL:76%

ASSASSIN DISK 100

BLODE RUNNER: AMOS crap trying to be Lode Runner. Avoid.
PATIENCE: Average version of Solitaire.
MONACO: Accurate copy of the old arcade overhead driving game. Nostalgic but not too wonderful.
OVERALL: 51%

ASSASSIN 102

FRUIT SALAD: Excellent, if not a bit strange, platformer. Good samples and psychaedelic backgrounds.
REBOUND: Souped-up Pong. Doesn't do much for the game in honesty but, ah, the good old days.
PACSIM: Oh dear, very poor Pacman indeed. I'd rather play a blank disk.
OVERALL: 75% [Mostly due to Fruit Salad]

ASSASSIN DISK 103

MEGARACE: SEUCK, yawn, a bit like Spyhunter but not much.
WACKY WABBIT: C64-style 'eat plants and avoid the hunter' game. Fairly poor.
THE LOST ORCREST: Slow Gauntlet variant. Pretty pathetic, all things considered.
OVERALL: 45%

super-trooper fashion, along with some moving platforms that trundle back and forth across the screen. To add to the fun some of the nasty little platforms melt only seconds after being jumped on - great. Billy suffers from some fairly heavy doses of inertia and momentum which make it just that bit more panic stricken as the time limits become more challenging and the platforms become narrower. It all sounds very simple and sparse but once you get into it there's actually quite a bit of fun to be had from scurrying about the place as the lights get faster and more clever.

Short and sweet, just like Sheena Easton really.

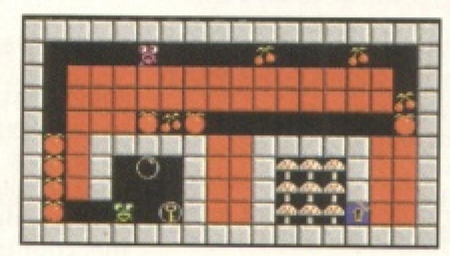
OVERALL 71%

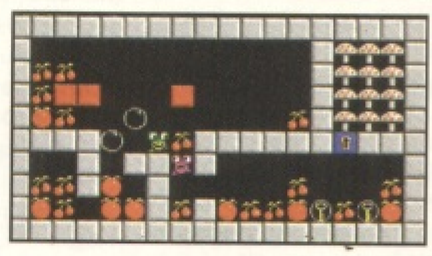
GRIBBIT

17 Bit Software,

Assassin disk 99.

This is what I like - no silly plot, just a silly game. God knows how to describe this because it's all a bit primitive looking but it actually has a great deal of character hidden down in the depths of its programming.





As seems to be the case with a good number of PD games, Gribbit is a successful mixture of known ingredients that combine to make a new game altogether. Some elements of Boulderdash have been incorporated here, with objects dropping on your head from a height as you burrow your way through the level, while recognised aspects of the oldy Mr Do creep in as there's fruit to be collected. There are even Mario-inspired mushrooms to be had, not to mention a bit of Bubble Bobble thrown in for good measure. My word, they're all here!

The aim of each level is to clear the screen of mushrooms while avoiding the large number of fruits that appear from nowhere and drop rather heavily on your head. Fruits can be a help as well as a hindrance, though, as if they're collected while they're not screaming towards you they actually increase your energy levels and reward you with an extra life should you collect enough.

It must be about time to bring on the baddy of the plot so here he is - a purple thingy! Yes, he's a mean bloke, this purple wotsit, and will quite happily follow you around and drain your energy until the 'Game Over' sign makes an appearance. Fortunately you have a defence in the form of a limited number of bubbles that can be dropped in any free space on the screen. Lead the purple plonker into the bubble and before you can say 'Patsy Patsy, take me now' you are the proud owner of a shining gold key which allows you access to locked rooms containing - yes, you've guessed - more mushrooms.

I believe that by now you must have the gist of the game and can only suggest that you crack open your PD Piggy bank and get those order forms off today.

OVERALL 79%

I'VE COME ABOUT THE DISKS...

Now that you're hooked you'll want to know where to get your hands on these PD delights. Just write to:

- 17 Bit Software, 1st Floor Offices, 2/8 Market Street, Wakefield WF1 1DH.
Telephone: (0924) 366982.
- Magnetic Fields, P.O. Box 118, Preston, Lancashire PR2 2AW.
- Fortiss PD, P.O. Box 2, Earl Shilton, Leicester LE9 8LU.
Telephone: (0455) 850980.

YOU ARE A

As you may have noticed, things have been a bit quiet on the 'competition winners' front lately, but with the introduction of a new system (namely Matt) things should run a bit more efficiently than in previous times. Here you'll find the winning names from all the competitions going back to February 1993. If you're one of the lucky names below then you can sit back with a smug look on your face and wait for that magical morning when David gets up extra early, puts on his toothfairy outfit (a slightly frightening thought, I'll grant you) and leaves a special present on your door step - just like cats do with dead mice. Hmm, yes, well anyway, eyes down for a full house.

WIN A TRIP TO EMMERDALE FARM!

Way back in February we got together with Psygnosis to offer you the chance to journey to the real Emmerdale with a friend. Well, the lucky visitor will be... Jason Bagshaw from Manchester. Well done that man - get your wellies on. The ten runners-up, who each win a copy of Creepers (if it ever comes out), are...

Dave Kelly, East Grinstead.
Peter Smith, London.
Alison Docherty, Edmonton.
Anebelle Kaspar, Manor Park.
Rob Dewick, Seven Kings.
John Knight, Sheffield.
Paul Stringer, South Wales.
Mike Parker, Catford.
Dave Hunt, Cambridge.
Alex John, Kent.



WIN H.R. GIGER GEAR!

Thanks to Cyberdreams, Vernon Hayes from Gravesend is now the owner of a set of Giger artbooks, while these ten runnesr-up get a copy of Darkseed and a giant Giger poster:

Darren Marsh. Blackpool.
J. Gardner, Kidlington.
Les Pitt, New Malden.
Eddie Christie, Scotland.
Alan R. Dexter, Leicester.
Stuart Price, Petorlee.
A. J. Glover, Swindon.
James Arthur, Surrey.
S. Rose, South Ockendon.
Nicholas Marshall, Halesowen.



WIN THE COMPLETE HIT SQUAD 1993 COLLECTION!

All you needed to do was complete the scintillating sentence "I would gladly sell my granny for a new Hit Squad game because...." to win this collection. Some of the highlights included being sick of getting soap on a rope for Christmas and not being able to play with granny cause she was dead. Oh, how hilarious you all are. Sick winners are:

Thomas Williams, South Croydon.
K. B. Evans, Derby.
Barry Cornell, Sunderland.
Brian Bartell, Co. Durham.
Sundip Jangi, Hayes.

WIN A MOUNTAIN BIKE!

Last May we were able to offer one lucky reader a Sahara Elite Mountain Bike worth £500(ish) thanks to Interplay. And the winner is... G. L. Mortley from Wymondham - huzzah! Ten runner-up prizes of T-shirts and Lost Vikings games go to:

I. Sherwood, Banbury.
Garig Grant, Melksham.
Dominic Cook, Bornemouth.
G. Newman, Northhampton.
Wayne Harrison, Newmarket.
Samuel Young, Darlington.
L. Taylor, Gainsborough.
Dave Smith, Grimsby.
Peggy-Ann Holmes, Attleborough.
S. Bullen, Marston Moretaine.

WIN THE TOP-FIVE GAMES!

Five lucky people had the chance to get their hands on the top-five charted games in our March Chart Attack compo. The winners are:

Corinne Barker. Littlehampton.
Toby Strange, Somerset.
Simon Cann, Ilfracombe.
Matthew Auton, Nuneaton.
Gill Stevens, Burbage.

WIN FIFTEEN ASSASSIN GAMES DISKS!

Fortiss PD were kind enough to offer ten lucky readers the chance to get their grubby paws on a nice bundle of PD treats. The lucky winners are:

A . Tomkotowicz, Nr Tewkerbury.
Steven Cruickshank, Mitcheldean.
Ian Morris, Stafford.
Ron Meacham, Tamworth.
L. Bamblett, Etwall.
Lisa Pringle, Northumberland.
Pete Stabler, Swindon.
Phil Monaghan, Marsworth.
Philip Dawson, Stockport.
D. Allport, Bradford.

WIN A DAY IN A NATURE PARK!

Simon James from Daventry is the winner of our May competition to take his family to a nature park, also collecting a copy of the Grandslam game Beavers into the bargain. Five readers also collect their very own copy of the game, they are:

Alexandra Dodsworth, Erith.
Barry Froman, Basildon.
David Shanks, Lanark.
Keith E. Hankin, Aldridge.
K. Brown, Otley.



WIN A GAME OF MONOPOLY!

Thanks to Supervision, Robert Cornwall from Barton-Le-Clay is the proud owner of a copy of European Monopoly following our May competition. Five readers will also be receiving a standard version. They are:

Andrew Mayes, Hull.
Jane Egmore, Norwich.
Mike Smith, Southampton.
Darell Hearne, Basingstoke.
David Grimshaw, Guildford.

WIN CRISPS, CRISPS, CRISPS!

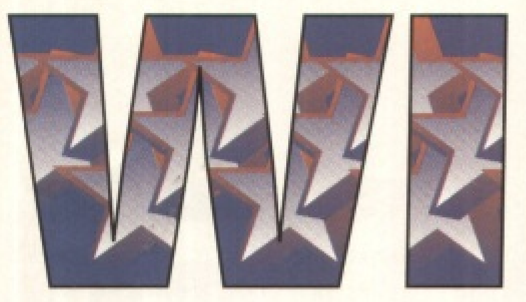
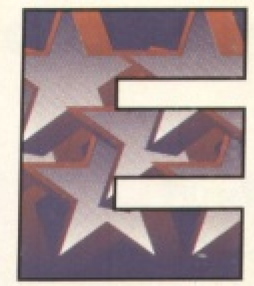
Robin Wigs from Surrey is a very lucky man thanks to the Psygnosis competition we ran in April's issue as he now has a free copy of Walker plus a year's supply of crisps winging their way across the country. Four other lucky people also get a copy of the game, plus one box of Walkers crisps. They are:

Jason Davelin, South Wingfield.
T. A. Ferris, Peterborough.
Iain Gorman, Selkirk.
K. Collins, Bedford.

WIN A JOYSTICK!

Thanks to those nice people at Special Reserve, in April we were able to offer twenty readers a beautifuly-crafted Competition Pro joystick. All you had to do was come up with a joke incorporating the words "special", "reserve" or "joystick". As you can imagine they were all quite poor but we picked some winners anyway, they are:

James Twitchett, Southgate.
Jake Florek, Runcorn.
David Magill, Co. Londenderry.
Stuart Wright, Broadgreen.
Jane Gibson, Frodsham.
Fernando Arreza Martin, Barcelona, Spain.
Tony Bishop, Willenhall.
Ashley Cashin, Nottingham.
Joe Miles, Chippenham.
Michael Jones, Birmingham.



WINNER!

Karmin Ali, London.
K. Lumley, Middlesborough.
S. O'Keif, Surrey.
Brian Cline, Bournemouth.
Michael Knight, Enfield.
Stephen Knapman, Uxbridge.
John Macleod, London.
Bob Hastings, Milton Keynes.
Keith Lyons, Essex.
Jenny Powell, Glasgow.
Michelle Horrocks, Abridge.

WIN SOME CDs!

Psygnosis were kind enough to offer our readers the chance to get hold of ten free CDs, and the winner of this superb compo was Aaron Donohoe from Burton-On-Trent with...

There once was a Lemming from Psygnosis,
Who had a bad case of halitosis,
The doc gave him a pill,
And a very large bill,
And said eat mints in very large doses.

Five CDs, LPs or cassettes go to Darly Booth from Ramsgate, who knows why he got a prize, with the five runner-up prizes going to:

Mike Yound, St Albans.
Steve Morris, Burnley.
Paul Shelley, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne.
Sean Watson, Belfast.
Martin Binfield, Rothwell.

WIN AN A1200!

Hey, Marc A. Thomas from Fishguard in Dyfed, you have been hand picked (by the lovely Jenny, no less) as our A1200 competition winner!! Thanks to all our readers for a marvellous response to this competition, the ten runner-up prizes of Gremlin's Legend Of Sorasil go to:

M. J. Smith, Lincoln.
Stuart Phillips, South Benfleet.
Scott Stevenson, Rickmansworth.
G. Saunders, Dover.
Paul Charlesworth, Newark.
James Harkin, Coventry.
B. Reed, Waltham Cross.
Carl LLoyd, Chester.
K. Osborn, Grimsby.
B. Wonnacott, Waltham Abbey.



WIN BILLIONS OF PD GAMES!

Following our July competition five readers will be receiving a copy of17-Bit Software's double CD collection filled with the very best PD has to offer. They are:

Stuart Swan, Berwick on Tweed.
George Birkinshaw, Garforth.
Simon Romans, High Wycombe.
Andrew Tuttey, Belper.
J. S. Smith, Sheffield.

WIN ANOTHER JOYSTICK!

We all went a bit joystick crazy back in July with Powerplay offering fifty people the chance to get their hands on a lovely new piece. The oh-so-lucky winners are:

Scott Shaw, Midlothian.
C. Hannan, Chester.
Paul Stratton, Upminster.
Michael Murphy, Ilkeston.
Roger F. Grace, Loughborough.
Pamela Hammour, Stockport.
Trevor Williams, Plymouth.
R. Wheelwright, South Glamorgan.
Matthew Lewis. Farnham
R Wilkes, Cheshire.
Stephen Wilson, West Denton.
M. Bewsher, Cockermouth.
Jarrod Smith, Chesterfield.
Jamie McTrusty, Cranbrook.
William A Mead, Aberdeen.
Andrew Tuttey, Belper.
C. W. Colver, Aylestone.
D. Nicholson, Dorchester.
D. Broughton, Street.
Julian Chadband, Westcliff-On-Sea.
A. Quinney, Colchester.
Chris Jukes, Chesterfield,.
Alaister Cook, Valleyfield.
David Atkinson, Shipley.
Michael Jones, Wuinton.
S. P. York, Gosport.
Paul Gibbs, Bournemouth.
Paul Hales, Abingdon.
R. Wakefield, Wisbech.
Lee Tsang, Moulton.
Andy Ash, Newport.
Marcus Hartup, Dunholme.
Richard Bird, West Norwood.
Jamie Lewis, Bishopston.
Matthew Geeson, Grantham.
Christing Couper, Caithness.
M. Rowe, Warrington.
Ken Robinson, Ashford.
Kevin Pollard, Fartown.
Richard Orton, Hinkley.
Thomas Leaky, Southampton.
Simon Boulden, Romney Marsh.
Claire Baldwin, St Anns.
S. D. Wyles, East Grinstead.
C. Rayment, Tunbridge Wells.
Gary Symington, Corby.
Peter Ware, Hinkley.
Andrew Clarke, Atherstone.
Scott Donnison, Winchester.
A. Mitchell, Wadebridge.
Jon Weeks, S Glamorgan.

WIN GAMES! (RECOMMENDED COMPO 3)

Each of the following people win a piece of software:

Massimo Corizza, Orpington.
Lee Edwards, Wickford.
Mark Reynolds, Nr Swindon.
Adam Davies, East Molesey.
James Rowell, Market Deeping.
James Argent, Cheshunt.
Paul Gulbert, Edinburgh.
Jonas Pehrson, Orebro, Sweden.
Jeff Anderson, Tasburgh.
Gregor Lennie, Bishopton.

WIN GAMES! (RECOMMENDED COMPO 4)

Each of the following people win a piece of software:

Joseph Young, Ripon.
James Gilbert, Newcastle-under-Lyme.
Peter West, Harlow.
B. Grice, Worthing.
Barney Walsh, Bolton.
Stuart O'Neill, Tamworth.
Richard Cooke, Middlesborough.
Todd Jordan, Brighton.
Jake Florek, Runcorn.
C. Wilby, Chelmsford.

WIN GAMES! (RECOMMENDED COMPO 5)

Each of the following people win a piece of software:

Andrew Terry, Aberdeen.
Jamie Mathew Biles, Shipton.
Emma Dowdswell, Kidlington.
Scott Dinsdale, Newcastle.
Michael Borella, London.
A. Rutherford, Motherwell.
S. Humphries, Baswich.
Brett Mansfield, Kinmel Bay.
S. J. Riley, Egham.
David Rimmer, Cuffley.

WIN GAMES! (RECOMMENDED COMPO 6)

Each of the following people win a piece of software:

A. Graysmark, Southwick.
Chris Hall, Mangotsfield.
Richard Ryhs Roberts, Todmorden.
Steven Donnelly, Kendal.
D. Norton, Haverhill.
Jonathon Slade, Eastborne.
Martin Brown, Stanley.
Andrew Bell, Lisburn.
Christopher Fells, Rotherham.
Mark Rogers, Preston.

WIN GAMES! (RECOMMENDED COMPO 7)

Each of the following people win a piece of software:

Matthew Geeson, Granthan.
C. Cobain, Saltney.
Ian Price, Milton Keynes.
Daniel Plumb, Stockport.
Christine Couper, Caithness.
Stephen Hillier, Stockport.
Ski Pearm, Sittingbourne.
Marc Harrigan, Nr Dritwich.
H. Pascoe, Helston.
Chris Jukes, Chesterfield.



Congratulations to you all!



RECOMMENDED

Oh no - the summer's nearly over! But while that may mean floods of tears and intense sadness for some, it's a positive blessing for us gamesplayers. At last we can quite happily retreat to the darkened confines of our bedrooms and tinker on the Amiga without mum or dad moaning at us to go outside and get some fresh air. Pah! Parents! What do they know? As far as we're concerned it's roll on winter! But what should you be playing on your computer over the coming months? Well, you could do a lot worse than try out some of the tippety-top titles listed below, believe you me...

The Aquatic Games

84%

Publisher	Millennium
Issue Reviewed	October 1992
Memory	512K
Price	£25.99

Although this type of 'waggle your sticks' sport game went out with Noah, The Aquatic Games injects new life into the old dog by introducing a number of unusual events. Packed full of cartoony visuals and aided by a bouncy soundtrack, the AG's should entertain most owners with a sense of humour.



Battle Isle '93

89%

Publisher	Blue Byte
Issue Reviewed	August 1993
Memory	1Mb
Price	£29.99

If you liked Battle Isle then you'll love this. It's basically more the same but with an enhanced control interface ripped from Historyline. Once again you have to pit your armies of tanks, troops and space fighters against the enmy hordes. For those of us who thought we'd never enjoy a strategy game it's a godsend.

Arabian Nights

90%

Publisher	Krisalis
Issue Reviewed	April 1993
Memory	1Mb
Price	£25.99

Yes, Arabian Nights is yet another platform game, but don't yawn and turn over the page because this one is really something rather special. It's fast, looks good, sounds terrific and plays superbly, but on top of that it's got some excellent 'arcade adventure' aspects to add a touch of depth. Smart stuff all round.

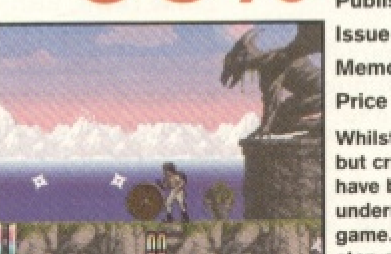


Beast 3

90%

Publisher	Psygnosis
Issue Reviewed	September 1992
Memory	1Mb
Price	£29.99

Whilst the first two Beast games were lovely to look at but crappy to play, Beast 3 show exactly how it should have been done. It's still dreamy to watch but underneath the visuals there's a right stonker of a game. The cleverly designed puzzles and frantic non-stop action should keep most entertained for weeks.

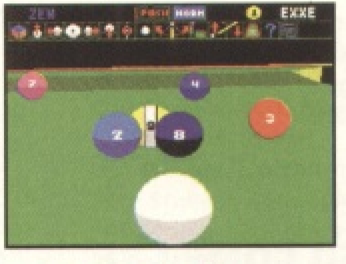


Archer Maclean's Pool

90%

Publisher	Virgin Games
Issue Reviewed	October 1992
Memory	512K
Price	£25.99

When Jimmy White's Snooker was released, the public lapped it up in droves. Archer has used the same game engine to produce a game which is arguably better than Snooker due to the fact that Pool is a more accessible and easier to play sport. If you missed out on JWWS then you'd better pot this 'un.

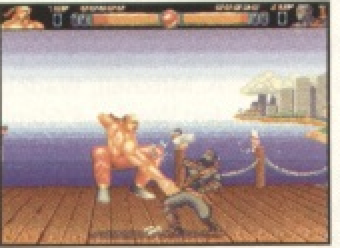


Body Blows

92%

Publisher	Team 17
Issue Reviewed	March 1993
Memory	1Mb
Price	£25.99

You've read the hype and we've had the phone calls but now, at last, Body Blows is here. And - yes! - it is better than Street Fighter 2. The graphics and sound are as excellent as you've come to expect from Team 17, and the fumpin' gameplay is fast and furious. Every Amiga gamer, beat-'em-up fan or not, will love this.



Assassin

92%

Publisher	Team 17
Issue Reviewed	November 1992
Memory	1Mb
Price	£25.99

Assassin is a Strider-based arcade shoot-'em-up which blows the rest of the rest of the feeble attempts clean out of the water. With perfect control, five massive levels, gorgeous graphics, inspiring sonics... Need we go on? Assassin should be in everybody's software collection, now!



The Chaos Engine

85%

Publisher	Renegade
Issue Reviewed	February 1993
Memory	1Mb
Price	£25.99

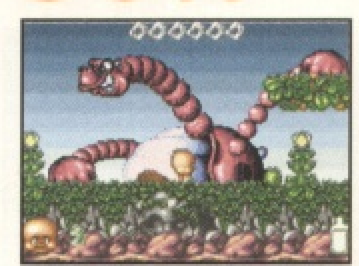
It's been an age in the making but the wait has just about been worth it. TCE is basically Gauntlet with knobs on - but what knobs! Computer-controlled, artificially-intelligent second player, music that changes with the action, RPG-like character development, the list goes on. Great fun, all in all.



Chuck Rock 2

86%

Publisher	Core Design
Issue Reviewed	April 1993
Memory	1Mb
Price	£25.99



CR2 stars baby Chuck Jnr in a perilous trek across loads of gorgeously-detailed and heavily-parallaxed scrolly levels in an attempt to rescue his dad, the famed Chuck Rock. Although familiar platform stuff, the huge, imaginatively-drawn baddies and tongue-in-cheek humour makes this a winner.

Civilization

81%

Publisher	Microprose
Issue Reviewed	August 1992
Memory	1Mb
Price	£29.99



Sid Meier does it again - and you thought he couldn't beat Railroad Tycoon! Your job? Evolve your populace up from the Stone Age to the 20th Century and beyond. The strain of the port from PC to Amiga shows sometimes in the disk accessing, but the involving strategic gameplay more than compensates.

Combat Air Patrol

89%

Publisher	Psygnosis
Issue Reviewed	April 1993
Memory	1Mb
Price	£29.99

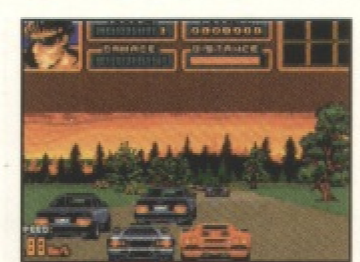


In the same month we review Desert Strike along comes the similarly Gulf War-inspired Combat Air Patrol. It's a flight sim with its eye firmly on playability rather than rigorous technical accuracy, so while it may not impress the sim hard-liners the rest of us will have a whale of a time. The 3D, by the way, is great.

Crazy Cars 3

90%

Publisher	Titus
Issue Reviewed	August 1992
Memory	512K
Price	£25.99



Another series of games where the third proved to be the best of the bunch. Forget the previous two, or most other sprite-based racers - this game is one of the contenders for the racing trophy. It scrolls, plays and moves so well that you'd be a fool to let this one overtake you.

Desert Strike

93%

Publisher	Electronic Arts
Issue Reviewed	April 1993
Memory	1Mb
Price	£29.99

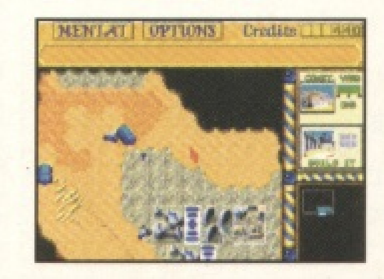


Definitely EA's best Megadrive-to-Amiga conversion yet, DS has you flying a state-of-the-art attack chopper around hostile desert territory. It's a thinking man's shoot-'em-up basically, with excellent graphics and sound and flawless playability. A classic, and actually better than its Megadrive inspiration.

Dune 2

90%

Publisher	Virgin Games
Issue Reviewed	July 1993
Memory	1Mb
Price	£30.99

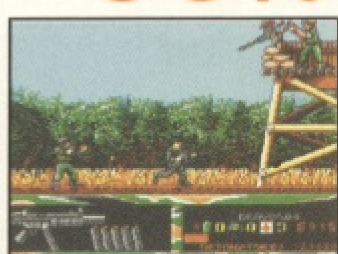


From Westwood, the people who brought you the equally recommended Kyrandia, comes this, a very playable and beginner friendly strategy game in the Sim City mould. Harvest spice, fight rival Houses, become ruler of Arrakis and have fun. This is good stuff for strategy buff and novice alike.

Fireforce

90%

Publisher	ICE
Issue Reviewed	October 1992
Memory	512K
Price	£25.99



Yet another blast from the past, Fireforce has distinctly Green Beret origins. Who cares where it comes from when the end product is this good? Violence and more violence (with some distinctly realistic throat-slitting) make this horizontally scroller a game which you should hide from your granny.

Flashback

93%

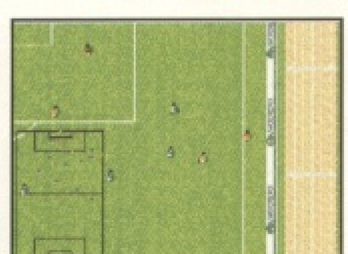
Publisher	US Gold
Issue Reviewed	March 1993
Memory	1Mb
Price	£25.99

Flashback is from the French geezers wot brought you Another World. If truth be told it's not quite as stunning as that classic but it's a close run thing. The animation of your character as he runs, jumps and fights his way, Prince of Persia like, through the alien world is superb. A platform game fan's dream.

Goal!

91%

Publisher	Virgin Games
Issue Reviewed	June 1993
Memory	1Mb
Price	£25.99



The game that would be Kick Off 3 is finally here and it's a scorcher! While not as instantly accessible as some of its rivals there's a wealth of option that you can toggle on and off to make life easier. In our book it's not quite the Sensi beater that some would have you believe but it's great none-the-less.

Gunship 2000

90%

Publisher	MicroProse
Issue Reviewed	July 1993
Memory	1Mb
Price	£34.99

Have we had to wait for this one! Don't worry, though, it's been worth it. Once again the 'Prose people have come up trumps with what is undeniably THE helicopter sim on Amiga. Super-fast contoured landscapes, wingmen, oodles of firepower and long-term challenge make this any flyboy's next 'must buy'.

Indy Jones IV (Adventure)

88%

Publisher	US Gold
Issue Reviewed	January 1993
Memory	1Mb
Price	£37.99

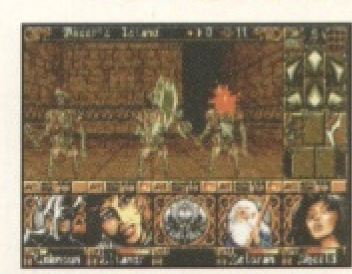


Many consider Indy IV to be the best graphic adventure ever and thanks to its superb graphics and sound, multiple plot paths and marvellous atmosphere they're not far wrong. However, on Amiga the enjoyment is marred slightly by extreme slowness in places and some annoying disk swapping problems.

Ishar 2

86%

Publisher	Silmarils
Issue Reviewed	July 1993
Memory	1Mb
Price	£29.99



Yet more adventures in Arborea! The game engine has been tweaked and cleaned up here and there, but technically it's not that much of a leap over what the first Ishar offered. All the same it's good, long-lasting entertainment, even if you can still spend too much time wandering lost.

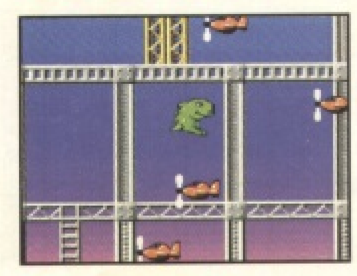
RECOMMENDED

Hoi

90%

Publisher	Hollyware
Issue Reviewed	August 1992
Memory	512K
Price	£25.99

A super-cute platform jobby that constantly astounds, Hoi is a surprise star on the Amiga. Help the 'saur through five bloody huge levels in one of the most smoothly playable games yet. With real gameplay variation this looks set to become a timeless wonder.



The Legend of Kyrandia

93%

Publisher	Virgin Games
Issue Reviewed	November 1992
Memory	1Mb
Price	£29.99

A graphic adventure in the Monkey Island 2 model. As Brandon, your only chance of resuscitating your turned-to-stone Grandad is by defeating the mad jester Malcolm (the best villain to have appeared in an Amiga game yet). Lots of truly gorgeous graphics and an inspired player interface.

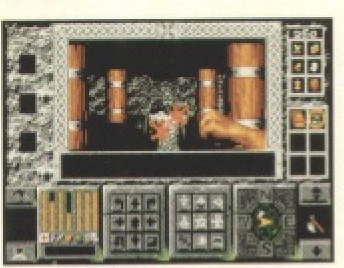


Legends of Valour

92%

Publisher	US Gold
Issue Reviewed	December 1992
Memory	1Mb
Price	£25.99

LoV uses an amazing graphics engine to generate the most realistic 3D environment you ever seen! It gives you total freedom of movement in the fantasy gameworld and makes this one of the most atmospheric RPGs yet! Destined to be hailed a classic, you'd be foolish to miss it.

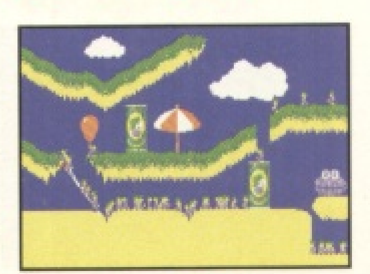


Lemmings 2

91%

Publisher	Pysgnosis
Issue Reviewed	March 1993
Memory	512K
Price	£25.99

Oh yes! They're back! Topping what must be THE classic game of the last few years was never going to be easy but DMA Design have done a top job. There are fifty new abilities to learn (some Lems can even fly!) and increased player interacton with the scenery. Just as much fun as the original ever was.

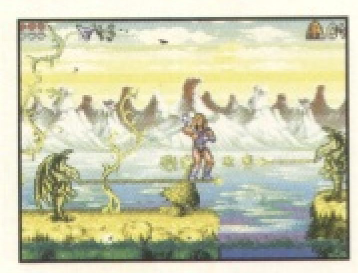


Lionheart

91%

Publisher	Thalion
Issue Reviewed	March 1993
Memory	1Mb
Price	£25.99

German coders are on a bit of a roll at the moment, what with No Second Prize and now this, a hack-n'-slash platform romp. Boasting some of the most stunning scrolling parallax scenery you've ever seen and tight, addicitve gameplay, this is a terrific title that is an essential part of your software collection.

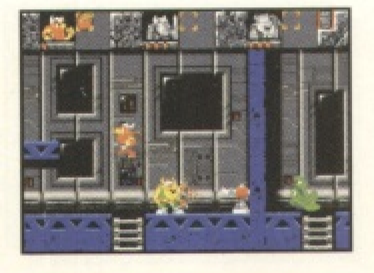


The Lost Vikings

90%

Publisher	Interplay
Issue Reviewed	June 1993
Memory	1Mb
Price	£25.99

The Lost Vikings is an arcade adventure with a premised very similar to Gobliiins', i.e. you have three characters under your control, each of whom have different abilities, and you have to use them in the right order to solve puzzles. Fortunately it's far better than that game. Indeed, it's one of the best this year!

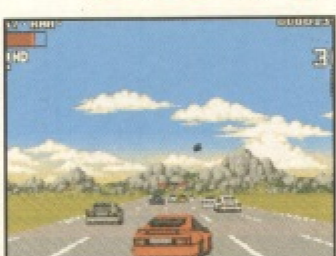


Lotus 3

86%

Publisher	Gremlin
Issue Reviewed	October 1992
Memory	512K
Price	£25.99

The third Lotus instalment mixes the best of the two previous offerings and ends up with a game which will satisfy all. With laps or circuits, a variety of race conditions and an unusual course designer, Gremlin have produced a real winner. You still can't wreck the Lotuses, though!



McDonalds Land

90%

Publisher	Virgin Games
Issue Reviewed	December 1992
Memory	1Mb
Price	£25.99

Yet another attempt to 'do' Mario on the Amiga, this one succeeds thanks to superb playability and some interesting twists on old platforming themes. Of course it's barely got an ounce of originality but who cares when the game's this much fun? Want a great platform game? You got it!

Monkey Island 2

94%

Publisher	US Gold
Issue Reviewed	July 1992
Memory	1Mb
Price	£37.99

What else is there left to say? The game to end all graphical adventures with genuine humour and gorgeous hand-painted graphics improves in every way over the original (a task in itself). The disk accessing is a trifle too much but the overall package is one of the best you'll ever see on the Amiga.



No Second Prize

91%

Publisher	Thalion
Issue Reviewed	December 1992
Memory	1Mb
Price	£25.99

NSP is arguably the first bike game to actually make you feel like you're astride a throbbing metal monster. Where it scores most over its predecessors is the ease of control the player has over the bike - it's sheer bliss! Virtually faultless, it ranks alongside such other racing classics as Lotus and F1GP.



Putty

87%

Publisher	System 3
Issue Reviewed	October 1992
Memory	1Mb
Price	£25.99

A high-flyer in the charts - and deservedly so. Putty is one of the most original games, let alone platform games, to have appeared in a long time. As a tiny little blue blob, the player has to slip, stretch and absorb his way around umpteen gaudy levels, rescuing robots from an evil wizard's minions. Try it - you'll like it!

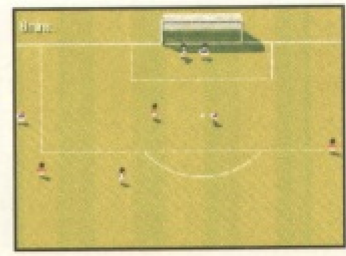


Sensible Soccer V1.1

93%

Publisher	Renegade
Issue Reviewed	December 1992
Memory	512K
Price	£25.99

Here at The One we don't care what you OR your mates say - Sensisoccer kicks seven bells out of Kick Off 2. Instinctive control and out-and-out addictiveness make it a joy to play, and the improved goalies in this revised version have produced a game that's near flawless!

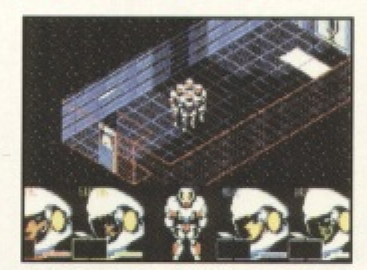




Shadoworlds

88%

Publisher	Krisalis
Issue Reviewed	November 1992
Memory	1Mb
Price	£25.99



From the same boys who brought you Shadowlands, Shadoworlds re-employs the Photoscape system to good effect in this Aliens-inspired RPG. The accent's more on action here than the puzzle-orientated Shadowlands and arguably suffers for it - shooting monsters in half-darkness can get annoying at times!

Troddlers

85%

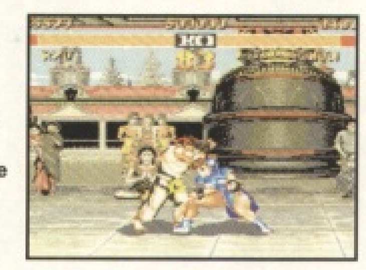
Publisher	Storm
Issue Reviewed	October 1992
Memory	512K
Price	£25.99

A puzzle game which is firmly Lemmings influenced, Troddlers adds to the DMA classic by introducing a number of different level objectives. If anything it owes a little more to Solomen's Key than Lemmings with its emphasis on block manipulation as a means to guiding the Troddlers to the level exit!

Street Fighter 2

89%

Publisher	US Gold
Issue Reviewed	January 1993
Memory	1Mb
Price	£27.99



Street Fighter 2 on the Amiga isn't half bad at all. It's not as smart as the SNES version, agreed, and die-hard fans of the coin-op may be disappointed by some of the graphical omissions like the lack of parallaxed backgrounds, but there's still no denying that this is one of the Amiga's better beat-'em-ups of late.

Wing Commander

87%

Publisher	Origin
Issue Reviewed	November 1992
Memory	1Mb
Price	£29.99

It's the PC-to-Amiga conversion no-one thought we'd ever see, but here it is and it's not half bad. It's got everything the PC version had and is thus just as impressive. Although the 3D can be sluggish at times, the superb feeling of actually taking part in a big space campaign pulls you through the occasional lulls.

Superfrog

93%

Publisher	Team 17
Issue Reviewed	April 1993
Memory	1Mb
Price	£26.99

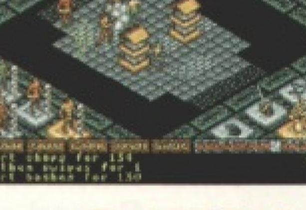


Forget Zool - this is the real Amiga 'Sonic-beater'. Like all Team 17's games it looks and sounds marvellous, but the gameplay is what really makes the game shine. From the control through the level design to the difficulty, it's all been brilliantly thought-out. You won't have had so much sheer fun in a long time.

Worlds of Legend

89%

Publisher	Mindscape
Issue Reviewed	June 1993
Memory	1Mb
Price	£25.99

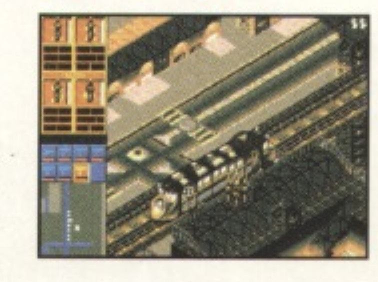


If you missed last year's Legend then you should make for it right now and get this. It's a simply superb RPG which uses a near-identical control system. It's got plenty of action and buckets of atmosphere. If you're the sort of person who normally cringes in horror at the thoughts of RPGs then this will convert you.

Syndicate

88%

Publisher	Electronic Arts
Issue Reviewed	July 1993
Memory	1Mb
Price	£26.99



Cross Bladerunner with a Sam Peckinpah movie and what do you get? Syndicate. From Bullfrog, this isn't perhaps quite in the same league as Populous 2 or Powermonger but it's damn fine all the same, especially if you like your computer game violence gorey and realistic. Dead smart.

Zool

87%

Publisher	Gremlin
Issue Reviewed	October 1992
Memory	1Mb
Price	£25.99

Gremlin certainly cooked up a character to rival even Mario and Sonic in this 'tribute' to the sad consoles. Fast, furious and manic in every way, Zool is a statement to industry that the Amiga can perform as well as the plastic slabs - and better! There's nothing like Zool to impress your mates.

COMPETITION

It seems like only a month ago that we were here last, posing you some cunning conundrums. But that's probably because it was. All you have to do to win one of ten pieces of software up for grabs is write the answers to the following three questions on the back of a postcard or sealed envelope and send them to: Recommended Compo 9, THE ONE, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU to arrive here by no later than September 28th. The first ten correct entries we select after the closing date win.

(1) Who (or what) is the 'Ed' we often amusingly refer to? (That's obvious - Ed.)
(2) What was the name of TV's famous talking horse?
(3) What was the first name of Crackerjack's presenter 'Stewpot'?

RECOMMENDED



Next Month with Simon Byron.

Let's just get one thing straight: I don't enjoy lying to you. My parents were very strict with me as a child and if they caught me spreading any fabrications (like telling my mates I'd been allowed to stay up to watch Blake's 7 and then attempting to describe the colour of the monsters even though we only had a black and white telly at the time), they'd force me to read Pinocchio over and over again whilst tugging at my nose with a pair of pliers. Then they'd march me to the family automobile, place me face down behind the car, tie my feet to the rear bumper and my hands behind my back before driving off at top speed until my teeth had been ground back to my gums.

But that wasn't the worst of it - swearing carried a far greater penalty. My mum used to prop my eyelids open with a couple of sewing needles before my dad blew sand in my face. Then, after they'd finished their fun, they'd chop my hands off so that all I had to try and remove the irritation was a couple of bloody stumps.

So as you can see, with a strict upbringing like that, I try not to tell fibs or swear (words like 'crap' and 'bloody' are added by Dave who then highlights them and sends the issues back to my family, just to get me in trub). Okay, so I know last month I promised we'd review Frontier, Stardust, Blastar and Apocalypse, but due to circumstances beyond our control they never turned up.

Well, you must be thinking, what will be in next month's issue? As far as we're aware the games which have placed their towels over a number of pages are Apocalypse, Stardust, Burning Rubber, Blastar, D-Hero, F-117A Stealth Fighter 2, Dogfight, Ambermoon, Tensai and Overdrive. We may, just may, have reviews of Uridium 2, Darkmere and Frontier (but remember, I said 'may').

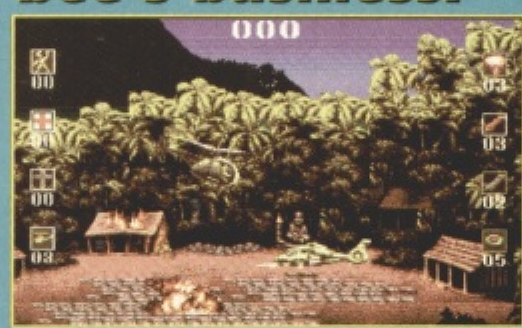
Features? You bet- the Summer European Computer Trade Show is just around the corner and there'll be a huge report on what's hot Amiga-wise. We've also got a couple of ideas for other features but they're as yet unconfirmed and I'd hate to get your hopes up.

As for the disks, well, have we got a demo for you. After months of thumb-twiddling we'll be proud to present one of the most impressive demos an Amiga mag has ever had the privilege of giving to its readers. We're not at liberty to disclose exactly what it is but you'll love it - I've just dribbled down my T-shirt and I've known about it for months. Plus there'll be another disk packed full to the boot-block with playable demos of all the latest releases.

There's just one last thing that I'm allowed to mention. We'll have an EXCLUSIVE Work In Progress of one of the most talked about games of the year and a sure bet for Christmas Number One. It's violent, it's hard and we're the only ones brave enough to report back from the combat zone. Trust us - it'll be B-I-G.

Right, must go now, the October issue beckons and Dave's going on holiday. Time to have fun...

October issue on sale September 28th. It'll be the bee's business.









NEXT MONTH